

SEP 15 1941

# The CLEARING HOUSE



*September*

## PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES IN DEMOCRACY:

*A special section of six articles  
and one department in this issue*



### 75 Visits from Community Leaders

By GERALD M. WELLER



### What I Want of My Principal

By MARTHA BUCHER



### Boise High School's Trouping Theater

By HELEN MAYER FARRER



Do Junior High Schools Cultivate Desirable Attitudes? . . .  
"Ralph Had My Permission to Skip His Homework" . . .  
National Crisis: What Can Art and Music Contribute? . . . Lone  
Scouting in a Rural High School . . . Teachers, Here is Your  
Final . . . Etc.

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A JOURNAL for MODERN  
JUNIOR and SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

# The Clearing House

A journal for modern junior and senior high schools

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Education  
Review

# The Clearing House

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

VOL. 16

SEPTEMBER 1941

No. 1

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## NOTICE TO WRITERS

We welcome contributions from our readers. In every issue we publish teachers' and administrators' articles reporting improvements, experiments, and successes as achieved in their schools. Many of our readers have accomplished things in classrooms and in school systems that should be known in thousands of other high schools.

Our preferred length for articles is 1,000 to

2,500 words. We also welcome items reporting good but minor ideas in 50 to 600 words. In addition to fact articles (which need not be dull or prosy) we invite articles of controversy, satire, etc., on secondary-education subjects. Typing should be double-spaced. Keep carbon copy and send us the original.

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*Announcing*

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# BLOCK BEAUTIFUL:

## Pupil club changes a community

By

LUCILE SPENCE

THE OLDER MEMBERS of the Wadleigh High School faculty shook their heads when some one made a wager of a box of candy that no ornaments on our school Christmas tree would be broken during the Christmas vacation.

Some others shook their heads when it was suggested that no windows would be wilfully broken during the summer vacation, and that the block on which the school

is located would receive pressure flushing by eight o'clock each morning when other side streets in the neighborhood received no such attention.

Others shook their heads at the suggestion that a real estate agent would some day come to the school seeking good tenants for his house across the street from the school. But all of these things came true when Miss Margaret C. Byrne came as the new principal of Wadleigh High School.

*The school block.* When Miss Byrne came she found an old school in an old neighborhood, a part of Harlem in New York City. Two conditions struck her: First, the lack of friendliness that seemed to exist between the school and its immediate community; second, the littered sidewalks and gutters, neglected both by the Department of Sanitation and the people who lived on these streets. Miss Byrne thought of a plan which she called the "Block Beautiful", to try to correct these two conditions.

To understand the carrying out of this plan, one must know the neighborhood and the school. The school had been built some thirty years ago on a vacant lot surrounded by other vacant lots. As the years went by, a crowded city community of six-story apartment houses inhabited by well-to-do, mid-

—♦—

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Here is no story of how the pupils planned a model Utopian community, and then went on to the next unit. Instead, this article reports what the pupils of Wadleigh High School, a school for girls in New York City, actually accomplished in their campaign to improve living conditions in their neighborhood. Wadleigh High School is located in an overcrowded tenement district. The new principal found a garbage-strewn neighborhood of unfriendly people, neglected by landlords and the Department of Sanitation. She invited the pupils to join a "Block Beautiful" Club—and this is the story of its campaign, its energetic drive, that changed conditions both on the streets and in the homes. Miss Spence is a member of the faculty of the school.*

dle-class people grew up with this school. As the school and the houses grew older, these more fortunate individuals moved away with their children, leaving this old school building and its surrounding community of out-moded houses to the less privileged people and their children.

Many of these people had come from the sunny West Indies and the sub-tropical south; there were Porto Ricans and Negroes. Many individuals had come from rural communities and were, therefore, little acquainted with the customs of urban life, the problems of the disposal of household waste, protection of children in a city environment, care of family pets, and the proximity of neighbors unlike themselves.

These present problems were, moreover, aggravated by the all-important one of earning a livelihood, for these people are among those last hired and first fired in this community. To pay for the higher rent and other family expenses, the mother often joins the father in securing money. Where the small middle-class family once lived, the large family, increased by a few roomers to help eke out the family budget, now spend their days and nights.

*Work with Wadleigh girls who lived on the block.* It was this block on which the school stands that Miss Byrne wished to make the "Block Beautiful". The project involved planning means of contact with the adult heads of families and with the owners and caretakers of the houses. The girls living in the block, who attended Wadleigh High School, were our best contact with many of the adult heads of families. By means of bulletin notices and individual notes, all-day pupils living on this square block were invited to a meeting after school. Of the many girls notified, about twenty came to the first meeting. The club sponsor was a teacher, a graduate of the school and a worker in the community.

The first meeting was spent talking over the general plan of the "Block Beautiful", and some of the evident conditions which

pupils knew. The meeting ended with the election of a temporary chairman, who set the next meeting date, and an assignment to get the girls to talk over the plan and to get the reactions of their families. Because of the varying reactions of pupils and families to the idea, the original group changed and was reduced in number. Permanent officers were chosen subsequently, and a permanent meeting date was set.

The plan for the activities of the group was as follows: to survey their home conditions, to obtain information about their neighbors' homes, to talk with janitors and landlords, and to aid in making contacts with the adults of the block. The findings were most interesting: hallways were dirty, dumbwaiters were cluttered, some dumbwaiters were nailed shut. In some houses garbage was not regularly called for, and yards were filled with papers and other rubbish; some, however, were regularly swept, and tenants cooperated to keep them clean.

Many janitors had insufficient containers for garbage; some left them out all day and children played in them. Careless pet owners allowed their animals to commit nuisances on the sidewalks. Many structural violations existed in the apartments: they were not regularly painted; fire escapes were cluttered; many tenants, especially roomers, threw garbage and rubbish into the streets. There was an air of distrust and hostility between janitors and tenants.

Next followed a discussion of what could be done to correct these conditions. This brought the girls to the work of the Departments of Health, of Sanitation, and of Buildings and Tenements. They found out the addresses and names of the Commissioners and the types of grievances to report to each. Upon the request of some girls, different forms of letters were worked out as well.

At the same time that these club activities were going on, the girls also aided in the distribution of letters to 300 tenants in the

block. This responsibility involved distributing letters in their own apartment houses. A few mothers who did not go to work in the day distributed letters in other houses, and some girls accompanied the club sponsor in handing out the few remaining letters.

When a group of the girls decided they would like to see how people like themselves could live, plans were made to visit a Federal Housing Project about two miles away. The secretary of the group aided the sponsor in arranging a conducted tour through the houses.

The girls enjoyed an extremely interesting afternoon after school, observing the successful handling of many of the vexing problems they faced each day. They saw the kindergarten and the nursery for the pre-school children, the hallway incinerator for the disposal of waste, the community laundry, and the club rooms for men and women. They learned about the requirements for admission to the project and about the financing. They talked with the assistant manager; they visited several of the apartments and admired their efficient lay-out. They met some of their friends from Wadleigh, and played in the project playground. They came away with a vision of what could be.

This was not their only trip outside their immediate community. A discussion of recreation in the neighborhood stimulated individual visits to play streets, the public library, and school centers. These were followed by reports and discussions of the good times that could be had near by.

Finally the group obtained permission, through the secretary, to plan an evening in the neighborhood house in the next block. They had a very good time going through a reconditioned, three-story private house which now serves as the neighborhood center. They played ping pong and visited the classes in creative dancing and rural gardening. (To the sponsor's surprise, a problem Wadleigh pupil was making a

definite place for herself in the center as a junior leader, a teacher of ping pong, and the rhythm band conductor.) These excursions taught the group what was at their door.

As was earlier stated, the girls had excellent opportunities for working with grown-ups. At the meeting which their parents attended some of them acted as ushers, and one of their number, after much coaxing and writing of speeches and practising of speeches, told the adults what the club had done in discovering and correcting the problems of the block.

Each Christmas a party was planned for the very young children in the neighborhood. This party was a gift of the girls and teachers in the school to the neighborhood. The preparation for the first party began with the contribution by one of the teachers of a huge Christmas tree, to be placed in the outside court of the school. Girls brought toys and other articles to fill 300 stockings in the homemaking class. The tree was decorated with ornaments brought by each girl. The members of the Block Beautiful Club were most active and stimulating in the preparations, and helped to take care of and amuse their little brothers and sisters and neighbors.

There have also been parties in the spring; one spring a seed planting party was held. The members of the Block Beautiful Club helped the members of the Biology Club collect cheese boxes for their gardens. One of the members of the Biology Club had an excellent day job in showing the little folks how to plant the seeds. Collecting and planting of the boxes and filling them with soil proved a very meaningful project for the club. When the children left the party, each carried a dark-green cheese box filled with soil, and held in a grubby little hand a package of seed and one gladiolus bulb. They all expected to return in the fall to receive the beautiful prize they had been told about.

By the time school was over, we were

very conscious of little green boxes that appeared on fire escapes of houses around the block. The drought of the summer worked havoc with the little plants, and less than a half dozen were brought back in the fall by each child. These showed devoted care and good results. The prizes were: first prize, one dollar and a Wadleigh banner; second prize, fifty cents and a Wadleigh banner.

*Work with the adults on the block.* The problem of contact with the owners was solved by the chairman of the committee of the Block Beautiful. She sent letters to all owners explaining the Block Beautiful idea, and invited them to a meeting in the school one evening. The representatives of the local Police Precinct, the Juvenile Aid Bureau, and the Department of Sanitation were also invited. After ideas were presented there was open discussion.

Most of the group placed the blame for conditions on the non-cooperative and ignorant tenants. Only one owner showed any sympathy for either tenants or the poorly paid janitors. The group went away, however, promising to cooperate by sending in the names of the tenants of their houses. Three hundred names were sent to the school; three hundred letters of invitation were prepared by the school mimeographing squad.

As stated before, as a result of the distribution by the Block Beautiful Club of three hundred invitations, less than fifty tenants came to the meeting. Most of them were women; some were parents of the girls of the club. After a simple statement of the idea and a report of the work done by the girls of the community, discussion followed. The people were interested in (1) problems of landlord and tenant relationship, (2) high rents, (3) failure to give tenants the service they pay for, (4) the possible reprisals against tenants who report bad conditions, and (5) lack of cooperation of the Department of Sanitation and the Police.

At the end of the meeting five women

and a man promised to be ready to aid the school in any further plans. These people have been tireless in their help to the school, particularly in the giving of parties to the young children. They have personally visited homes, distributed Block Beautiful pamphlets, and explained the efforts of the school to reach the community in a friendly spirit. They made arrangements with the neighboring elementary-school principal to distribute pamphlets for later parties through the school.

They are now helping to find children for a new neighborhood house established near the school. They and others now come to a class in home nursing conducted twice a week by a WPA teacher. Their lives are closely united with the life of the school.

There has been increased interest and good will on the part of the community and the school, from the smallest boy to the oldest individual. There has also been increased interest of the people in their homes. Window boxes with beautiful ivy and other plants have appeared in windows; some landlords have increased the number of janitors; others have made efforts to clean up yards in general. Most recently a new owner of four houses across the street from the school came to see Miss Byrne about his desire to obtain responsible tenants for his houses. These houses are now being renovated. When they are ready for occupancy, the Block Beautiful idea will help to stimulate the persons who will occupy them.

The Departments of Sanitation and Police have shown increased interest, as evidenced by the facts that the block on which the school is located receives pressure flushing each morning, the rubbish is collected before eight A.M., and police protection is furnished for the school at all times.

*An appraisal of the Block Beautiful experience.* In summarizing the thread that has run through this experience in school and community cooperation, certain difficulties



must be mentioned. The pupils and their parents had limited experiential background; many of the girls were limited in time because they were housekeepers at home; some could not remain after school because their mothers did not wish them to remain. Some had no desire to leave the neighborhood; some could not leave the neighborhood because they had no carfare; many felt that no change could be effected, that all efforts were futile. One of the difficulties arose from the easy distrust which poor people have for schools and city departments.

Whatever benefits were derived were due to certain principles: the Block Beautiful idea met a very definite need, made a strong group in which the girls, their parents and teachers had an opportunity to contribute

in their own way and on their own levels to the project. It was possible for persons of all racial groups and economic levels to work together. The girls and their parents learned how to get results from the responsible city departments.

This type of activity may serve to strengthen our democratic way of life, because each individual had an opportunity to give in his own way, because each individual had an opportunity to work with all types of groups, and because the sustained responses of the city departments concerned gave them faith in the persons delegated to take care of their problems for them.

Those who shook their heads before, shake them now in surprise at the results of the healthful experience which a school and the community had together.

## "PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES IN DEMOCRACY"

*Part I: 6 articles and a special department*

*Part II will appear in the October issue*

This special section of *THE CLEARING HOUSE* (pages 3 to 25) deals with one of the two major areas in which American high schools can serve in the national defense program—and that is the strengthening of education for democracy.

There have been countless theoretical articles on this subject. You will find none here. Each of the six articles, and each of the condensed reports of practices in the special department following the six articles, reports some one plan or idea that a named high school has found effective in giving its pupils "Practical Experiences in Democracy".

Part II of this special section, to appear in the October issue of *THE CLEARING HOUSE*, will offer a number of successful ideas and plans from still other high schools.



# COMMUNITY LIFE

*Junior-high pupils study  
conditions in Des Moines*

# PROBLEMS

By JAMES A. SHELDON

AWARE of their responsibility, teachers are alert for new methods which will meet the demands of democracy in education. Experience has convinced the writer that the ninth-grade course in "Community Life Problems", as required in the Des Moines Public Schools, provides an excellent opportunity for practical training in citizenship.

Such a course in junior-high civics might well be set up on a laboratory basis with maximum participation by pupils as the principal aim, and the procedure one of "learning by doing". Pupil participation need not be limited to class activity alone, but might include planning the course with the teacher. A discussion of experiences with a typical class during the past semester follows.

The first important assignment at the beginning of the course concerned the meaning of the title, "Community Life Problems". We agreed that everyone should have a clear understanding, first of the term, community, and then, of problems associated with community life. After a thorough discussion of these terms the class

suggested for study a list of communities with which they were familiar. It was necessary for the teacher to supplement this list with communities less familiar to the class. Our completed list, then, for the semester's course, consisted of the home, the school, the city, the county, the state, and the nation.

The class was then asked in what order it wished to study these units. The majority favored *the city* for the opening unit. I asked them what they wished to know about their city. I urged them to be very sincere in their questions and not ask merely for the sake of asking. They were to ask what they *really wanted to know*. The following are representative questions:

1. How is our city governed?
2. What keeps a person from voting at several places on election day?
3. Why and when was our city first established?
4. How do our traffic accidents compare with those of other cities of about the same size?
5. Is delinquency a big problem here?
6. Is our housing problem a serious one?
7. What industry employs the greatest number of people?
8. What are our health problems?
9. Is our city well zoned?
10. Does our city spend as much for recreation as do other cities of the same size?

There were, of course, many more questions.

Our next step was to decide which of the foregoing questions should be studied by the entire class as a group and which should be considered by smaller groups, or committees, made up of people especially interested in some particular problem. It was decided that the class, as a group, should

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ninth-grade pupils of Harding Junior High School, Des Moines, Ia., study the problems of living together in that city. They investigate the possibilities and responsibilities of effective citizenship. Here the author explains the "student government" organization of the class, and some of its investigations and activities. Mr. Sheldon teaches social studies in the school.*

study all questions which pertained to the history, government, and delinquency problem of the city.

It seemed quite logical to the group that the history of our city should be the first subject for study. This question was put to the class, "What do you wish to know about the history of your city?" There were many interesting replies stated in the form of questions. Everyone was expected to contribute his share of the information needed to answer the questions. Indeed, it did take much effort and time to satisfactorily answer some of the requests for information. Pupils turned to many sources for their information, varying from interviews with the city's oldest citizens to research activity in our public libraries. The class was always busily engaged in this adventure.

In preparing for the next step, the study of city government, the class again submitted its questions, some of which follow:

1. How does one become a candidate for the city council?
2. What type of city government do we have?
3. How many are there on our council?
4. When and how is the election held?
5. How much does our city government cost and where does the money come from?
6. How does one take a complaint to the council?
7. How are ordinances passed?

It was suggested to the class that perhaps an interesting way to learn about city government and to find the answers to these questions might be by setting up a so-called "city government" in our class. This suggestion met with much enthusiasm. It meant action, and that is always popular with young folks. Immediately they wanted to know, "How do we get started?"

I explained that perhaps the first essential step was that of permanent registration. And so everyone went to work on his registration card, one similar to that used in our city. The cards were filed with our temporary "clerk" for future reference. This presented an excellent opportunity to em-

phasize the necessity of proper registration in order to exercise the right of suffrage.

We were now ready to nominate candidates for the five departments of the council. Pupils were urged to consult their references for the proper procedure of announcing candidacy and of handling nomination papers. It was indeed stimulating to see these young people eagerly search for the information they actually wanted! After all nomination papers had been filed—we agreed on a deadline—the campaign progressed with much excitement. Candidates, with the help of their friends, prepared all sorts of posters advertising their candidacy. Campaign speeches were in order. (We insisted on the very best of oral expression!) Several candidates printed their own cards on homemade presses and on the day of the election were lined up near the door handing out their cards to the voters. (We do hope we have not made politicians of all of these young folks!)

As the voters went to the polls they were not given a ballot unless their registration credentials were in order. This answered one of the questions raised, "What keeps one from voting in several places on election day?" The two candidates who received the greatest number of votes in each of the five departments became the nominees for the final election held soon afterwards. After this election the new council was ready!

The first assignment for the new council was to hear complaints submitted by the other members of the class. Each person was given an opportunity to submit some problem that *actually* existed. Much emphasis was placed upon the requirement that the problem be one that was very definitely a real one. The council met at the front of the room and one by one the class members appeared before the group, stated the problem, answered questions, and usually remained there until each was satisfied that something would be done about his complaint.

Complaints concerned bad street conditions, changes demanded in speed limits, neighborhood rowdiness, parking restrictions, garbage collection, etc. One boy stated that the street lights near his home had not been in working condition for a week or so. This case finally resulted in notifying the city hall, and the lights were fixed at once! One boy insisted that there was need of a stop-and-go light at a certain downtown intersection. The council differed with this opinion. The ensuing discussion resulted in several council members joining this boy, and together they checked traffic at this intersection for a period of one hour. On the following day the council agreed that there was need of the demanded safety measure. It took several days to dispose of this "most urgent" business.

In most of the cases the council did attempt to offer some sort of sensible solution. If it could not, our city officials were asked for advice. The council passed several ordinances as a result of the suggestions, and the class members were given an opportunity to see just what the procedure is. This was a most interesting part of the unit. Pupils did quite well in identifying community problems. I was especially impressed with the degree of sincerity with which they worked.

The third subject for consideration of the entire class was that of delinquency. Space does not permit a detailed account of this study. Our work began with attention centered on the causes, extent, costs, and treatment of delinquency, both in school and out. The study grew into an analysis of crime conditions in our city and what was being done about it. Pupils visited the city jail, court house, attended several court sessions, and interviewed several local judges. The entire class seemed much interested in the project.

Our attention now turned to those questions which were to be studied by committees. Class members assigned themselves to whatever committee had for its study the

problem with which they desired to work. Five persons indicated a desire to study the housing problem; others chose major industries, zoning, transportation, health, recreation, traffic, or others.

It has always been a problem to find effective means of sharing committee reports with the class. We decided to rule out the formal oral report, as the class felt that it was not an effective method. It therefore became the responsibility of the committees to devise effective means of sharing their findings. The methods were quite varied. The most common reporting "schemes" were skits, panel discussions, quiz programs, and recommendations to the council. This completed our unit on the city, and after checking up on ourselves to make certain there were no omissions, we were ready to turn to a new unit.

Space does not permit a detailed account of the other units—the home, the school, the county, the state, and the nation. Perhaps it should suffice to state that all the way through the semester advantage was taken of every opportunity for pupil participation as a means of better understanding—and remembering—the particular problem at hand.

As another instance of the program of "learning by doing", I might briefly mention our work on state legislation. One of the classes represented the senate, the other the house of representatives. Bills followed in routine fashion and pupils learned how state laws were made by making a few themselves! It so happened that our state legislature was in session at the time, so this helped much in motivating the work. Pupils would anxiously read the papers about the state legislative program, for they felt they had something "in common" with the legislators! To climax this unit the classes journeyed to the state house and observed the legislature in regular session.

These pupils were most observing and interested in the proceedings. Perhaps impressions have been made that may stay

with them for a very long time to come.

I am aware of the shortcomings of this procedure. It is not offered as a panacea for existing ills in our program for training in effective citizenship. It is rather an account of methods which the writer believes are effective. This is a conclusion arrived at only after much experimenting. It occurs to me that in order to develop proper citizenship traits it is essential that the individual know what is expected of him in his relation to other members of the community. Furthermore, he must understand how the various government agencies function in order to have the proper attitude toward and respect for the rules of organized society.

To prepare an individual for his place

in democratic living, it is well that he be exposed to some actual practice in group action, that he experience abiding by the will of the majority, that he help plan a group project whose result will perhaps depend in some degree upon his contribution, that he experience making mistakes and come to feel the consequences thereof, that he learn to identify problems of community life and be scientific in his approach to their solution, and that, through contacts with others in his group, he come to be tolerant in his thinking, in his speaking, and in his acting. It is our task, as teachers, to develop such a program. Perhaps the suggested procedure as presented here will, along with the many others, contribute something to that end.



## Recently They Said:

### *While Rome Burns*

Washington is "like a scrambled picture puzzle" so far as national education is concerned, reports Frederick L. Redifer in the May issue of *Frontiers of Democracy*. He mentions reports of an intense rivalry between the Office of Education and the National Youth Administration, and between the American Council on Education and the National Education Association "as to which organization shall be considered the representative of American Education". . . . Associational politics between the National Education Association and the American Council on Education "have bogged down the whole (defense) program to the disgust of the White House".—W. A. MACDONALD in *The New York Times*.

### *In Favor of Ignorance*

On the editorial page of the *New York Herald-Tribune* under date of March 2 appeared an editorial on the propriety of including the social sciences in the curriculum of the secondary schools. This editorial must have given a jolt to anyone interested in secondary-school education as a preparation for life in our fair land. The editorial was prompted by a "ruction" which recently arose in one of the upstate colleges with respect to the teaching of courses in citizenship. The argument advanced by the editor can be boiled down to the

following hypothesis: If a college faculty has difficulty in dealing with the subject of citizenship training, are "the social sciences a fit subject for secondary education"?

This comment reminds us of the statement of a prominent New York club woman who asserted that "it is far more important for our children to be taught that the American army never lost a battle than that they should be taught the truth." Far be it from us to imply that the editors of the *Herald-Tribune* would take any such position. But there is undeniably a logical kinship between the attitudes expressed in the two quotations, as there is with those assumed by Professor Robey in his indictment of textbook writers, and Merwin Hart in his drive against certain high-school texts.—Editorial in *New York State Education*.

### *Wartime Teaching*

If students are to develop a genuine understanding of international relations, they must be given a truer insight into the nature of modern war. Such study cannot be omitted on the ground that the subject is revolting. The breath of contemporary life cannot be kept out of the classroom. While the country is girding its loins for battle, while defense factories are booming, while our young men are being drafted and trained in the art of mechanized warfare, the schools cannot afford to remain aloof.—CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG in *School and Society*.



# PUPIL BUS OFFICERS

## Work for safety in transportation

By HARLOW E. LAING

AT 7:50 A.M. every school day, Lincoln Consolidated School's seventeen buses, never traveling at a speed greater than 25 miles per hour, start out upon the highways to collect 700 children from 63 square miles of fertile farm area.

There are 27 miles of heavily-traveled main highways within this district. These highways are approached a total of 129 times by the school buses each day. There are light warnings at only two of the intersections, although sign boards exist at all important intersections.

The heavily-traveled main double track of the Wabash railroad extends diagonally through this district for a distance of 9½ miles, with light and sound warnings at only two of the 15 road intersections. The 17 buses cross the railroad intersections a total of 38 times each day. By adding to these 167 major intersection hazards the innumerable minor hazards, such as the 759 stops made to load and unload children along the 255 miles traveled each day by these buses, we have a fair picture of one phase of the safety problem.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *If the American schools are to be laboratories for practicing democratic procedures, the experiences and activities carried on in the schools should be of the type that provides for that training. In this article, Dr. Laing shows how the pupils work together and share responsibility to achieve safety in transportation at the Lincoln Consolidated School, Ypsilanti, Mich. The author is supervising teacher of biology and agriculture.*

Within the ten-minute interval, 8:30 to 8:40 A.M., these buses enter the school grounds, unload, and disappear from view inside the school garage, where they are serviced by the superintendent of transportation and made ready for the afternoon trip. Upon leaving the buses the pupils enter the school building immediately, and all except the bus secretaries go to their lockers and thence to their first classes. The bus secretaries go at once to the office of the school secretary, where each one makes out a written report of conditions on his bus.

The report is made on a blank form which includes such items as highest rate of speed per hour, conduct of pupils, time of arrival, condition of roads and weather, names of absent pupils and causes of absence (especially sickness), cause and place of detaining the bus, and other incidental or unusual occurrences. These reports are promptly assembled and analysed by the "bus captain", a senior boy who is the highest student officer in the affairs of student transportation. The bus captain orally reports any urgent matters to the principal and to the superintendent of transportation, and puts all of the written reports in the transportation superintendent's file.

While this is going on the bus drivers—at present 7 are women, 3 high-school boys, 2 a college boy and a college girl, and 5 men who drive as a part-time occupation—report to the superintendent of transportation and receive any special instructions that he may have for them.

At 3:13 P.M. the buses are removed from the garage and assembled in position for loading. At 3:17 the children of the primary



and intermediate grades pass from the building and enter the buses, followed at 3:20 by the older pupils. The bus captain assists the superintendent of transportation in supervising the loading of the buses. Within seven minutes the buses are loaded, and within thirty more minutes the last pupil is delivered safely at home.

To the superficial observer the clock-like precision of this transportation system seems much like that of many other modern devices which are so fine and efficient that one merely exclaims "Fine work" or "O.K.", more for the sake of politeness than because of any newly aroused feeling of admiration. But the more experienced observer is not content with casual observation. He asks, "How about accidents?" "Aren't you stretching the little word *safely* just a wee bit at the end of the previous paragraph?"

The answer is, "I think not." Our past record shows a remarkable freedom from trouble. However, before commenting further on this record, let us find what is beneath the surface of things that makes such a record possible.

Each September on the third day of school, as soon as the buses arrive, the pupils of each bus go to a separate room where they elect their bus officers. The teacher of the room presides at the election. The pupils are reminded that they should choose capable and trustworthy officers who will do their duty. The method of reminding them often takes some form of pupil participation, in which, perhaps, several volunteers are encouraged to express their opinions.

With the greatest of freedom the occupants of each bus elect a president, a vice-president, and a secretary. There is a tendency to pass the offices around so as to give each of the older pupils a chance, but no rules or precedents are followed. Bus drivers are present as guests at all elections of bus officers, but do not participate in the election.

Although the officers of the individual

buses are nominated from the floor, a special safeguard has been instituted in order to insure that the bus captain shall be a person having greater than average sense of responsibility. All of the eligible persons are considered by the student council, which suggests certain nominees for the office. The bus officers then vote on these nominees.

This election, while guided by faculty members, is not dominated by them. Sometimes the president of the student council happens to be a very gifted and reliable person who carries on with little or no coaching by the faculty. The person elected bus captain becomes a member of the student council and attends all meetings of the council.

The duties of the president and the vice-president of each bus are to preserve order by means of persuasion, reminders, and reports, and to preside at all meetings held for the members of that particular bus. Cases of infringement of courtesy, or the rules of safety on a bus are handled first by the pupils of the bus in their own meeting. Any unusual cases may be heard by the bus officers of all of the buses, by the student council, by the principal, or by the superintendent of transportation.

Occasional bus meetings are held throughout the year to consider general problems. It sometimes happens that the pupils elect weak officers, so that some of the more steady older pupils really do much of the officers' work until the error in judgment is corrected at a later election.

During the seventeen years that this transportation system has been in operation, only one child has been involved in an accident, and fortunately her injuries were only slight and of temporary duration. This accident was caused by another vehicle under peculiar conditions and, while not at all chargeable to the school transportation system, nevertheless occurred between the time that the child left the bus and before she actually entered her own yard, and was therefore a matter of concern to the school.

Another incident that might have re-

sulted in tragedy illustrates the practical value of continuous and habitual pupil participation in cooperation and self-government.

A gasoline conduit became broken, causing gasoline to be splashed onto the hot exhaust pipe and thus setting fire to the lower portion of a bus laden with children while the bus was moving along the highway. The driver promptly stopped the bus, and an eighth-grade boy, who was not a bus officer at the time, handed the little ones out one by one, and commanded the older pupils to go last. The bus was emptied rapidly and smoothly, after which it burned completely. After this episode the boy who had distinguished himself was honored by various bus offices, and was eventually elected captain of all the bus officers.

Apparently in a democracy the leaders must be discovered before they can be wisely chosen. Therefore opportunities for discovering and developing suitable qualities of leadership are of great importance in student life as well as in adult civic affairs. Although crucial incidents cause certain qualities to be revealed with greater clarity, still, in the main, our pupils seem to realize that they must not wait until a bus burns

before attempting to develop qualities of leadership. Neither can they afford to burn buses deliberately in order to find out who would be their real leaders in such an emergency. For that reason, all of the pupils must be prepared to take command whenever and wherever their talents are in greatest demand.

Courses in first aid are stressed particularly for older pupils and bus officers. Each bus is equipped with a first aid kit, the use of which is familiar to many of the pupils. Several of the bus drivers and bus officers hold Red Cross certificates, and most of the others have completed part of the work required for a certificate. These studies are entirely voluntary for bus officers.

Participation has revealed that many of the bus officers have grasped the importance of the motto, "Be prepared". The boy whose leadership came to the forefront in the incident of the burning bus had not only the qualities of physical strength and a firm will, both of which were important, but he also had a greater than average sense of the importance of orderliness. It was this latter quality that enabled his strong will and strong body to do the right thing at the right time.



## An Educational Minority in Texas

There are some 150,000 Mexicans in Texas alone. What a wealth that would be if they were average citizens. Texas would then rate higher in educational status as compared with other states.

Texas has slept on her rights and opportunities, for she is truly an empire of two races and two languages. Mexicans have been begging at our doors for the future of their children for many years. They are ignorant, abused, isolated and starved until they are practically useless. Their progress has been hindered by our indifference until it may take a few generations of special help to put them on our level.

Some of the refugees, in years gone by, had reached a rather high level, but their children and grandchildren have had no opportunity to develop, much less advance. What a disappointment it must be to come to our land of promise and re-

ceive the crumbs that they get. Other foreigners find an equal footing; but not so with a Mexican. He is such a home article. Until recent years, Mexicans were barred from the Texas public schools except in towns that could afford separate schools. A Mexican in a small town or rural community could not attend school at all.

The parents of most of the children now in schools are totally illiterate. If the parents were born in Mexico, they can probably read Spanish; but if they were unlucky enough to have been born in Texas, they can read neither Spanish nor English. They cannot speak English well enough to become equal in wages or ability. If they return to Mexico after a number of years, they cannot speak or understand the current language to a great extent. They become a group without a country or language.—ANNA WOODFIN in *Texas Outlook*.

# HANDS OFF the STUDENT COUNCIL

Our policy in  
South Milwaukee

By

H. KEITH CADY

BOYS "at work"? Girls "at work"? Yes, they all must be "at work" to prove that democracy is the philosophy of life offering the greatest opportunities for us all to progress, regardless of race, color, creed, or social status. Webster defines "democracy" as a government in which the supreme power is retained by the people and exercised by representation. For democracy to survive it must be "at work". We can't idly sit by and gloat over the word without working to capacity in order to preserve it.

We at South Milwaukee are working hard to prove that democracy will work, and work effectively, in our school. We believe the "American Way" of life offers opportunity for everyone who wants to work for it. If our pupils are to enjoy the advantages of democracy after leaving school, they must actually understand and practice it in every way possible during their years in the school itself. The complete organization, from individual pupil to administration, must work together as a team.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Cady believes that student councils whose "hands are tied almost completely by their schools' administration and faculty" may do more harm than good, and give pupils a false impression of democracy. Here he reports the "hands off" policy which prevails at the South Milwaukee, Wis., Junior-Senior High School, where he is adviser of the Student Council. He tells of some of the interesting and unusual projects which this unhampered body has developed.

We have such a thing here and, although it is not perfect, we are steadily improving and enjoying its benefits. Our principal and superintendent are cooperating fully with every organization and individual who is trying democratically to work out individual and group problems. It may be the more difficult path, but in the long run the more satisfying and lasting outcomes will result for all.

Any school can easily say, "Why, sure we are democratic", but the test of such utterance comes in the results that substantiate such a statement. This article is being written about our school, and we shall attempt to explain our procedure, and the results thus far obtained.

We of course know that the individual pupil is the center of the entire program, and it is his interests and welfare in which we are primarily interested. Many clubs and groups with varied interests, such as Hi-Y, Girl Reserves, Q-Club, athletics, etc., are democratically "at work" in our school's organization. It would take many pages to explain each group's procedures and results, so this discussion will be limited to the actual representative group of the entire student body—our student council.

The council is a representative body composed of one elected member from each homeroom. Even the council's officers are elected by vote of the entire student body. It has the "go" signal to legislate on all things relative to the student body, but since its members are minors and cannot be held directly, singly, or collectively responsible for all its acts, there must be some higher power

of veto invested in our administration to stop definitely harmful legislation that might affect the school. During the four years our council has been functioning this power has never been used, but is there to be used if some crack-pot council should pass such laws as permission to pupils to damage the building, leave school whenever they wished, etc. These of course are exaggerated examples, but they are possible.

Following are some specific examples of our council's work during the four years of organization.

Each fall all the high-school student councils of this state send representatives to a convention. These representatives discuss common and current topics and exchange ideas. From the discussions thus far it is apparent that our student council is one of the more democratic organizations represented. There are many fine councils at each convention, but some show that their hands are almost completely tied by their schools' administration and faculty. We see no use for having councils in such schools, for they give their pupils a false impression of democracy, and in some cases do more harm than good.

Our council planned and executed quite an elaborate campaign to elect one of its members as this year's president of the state organization. They were successful, and you don't have to ask them whether democracy will work. They proved it in this case and returned to their own school with the greatest of enthusiasm to prove it will work in other things.

Each fall the pupils elect their class officers in much the same way our city, state, and national officers are elected. Nomination papers requiring a certain number of signatures are circulated in each class, and a deadline date is set for these to be in. Once the nominations are completed, the actual electioneering begins. Some nominees unite in parties and draw up party platforms. Then through a campaign manager each presents these to the student body through general assemblies. Very interesting cam-

paigns result, and a week or two elapses to allow them to crystallize.

Enthusiasm is high, and many qualities of a good leader are made definitely apparent during this time. Special days are set aside to allow each class to vote, and tabulate the results. One of the city's voting machines is used while a complete student election board supervises. The pupils look forward to this each year and can see a definite value in a real procedure they will continue to enjoy all through life. This type of election was originated by the student council, and is functioning more effectively each year.

Our pupils are known as the "Red Rockets". This theme originated with the pupils after months of searching for some satisfactory name. That theme has now permeated the entire school, and is to be seen in athletic announcements, class jewelry, school function posters, etc. The name was picked after much discussion, and is now just as important a part of our school as the building itself.

All of the school's social functions are regulated through one of the council committees. It works within certain limitations set by a faculty social committee, and receives from that committee advice on questions referred to it. The pupils themselves plan the number of dances, parties, etc., they think will best complete the social program. The majority of the next year's social calendar is completed in the spring of each year. Requests are called for from any and all organizations wishing to submit them, and after due consideration the social calendar is completed.

Naturally some mature advice is given by a faculty member, but this is given only when asked for and when it is very apparent that something has been overlooked in the student committee's thinking. We want the pupils to actually feel that this is their school and that they always have a right to voice their just opinions. Each year's committee profits from the previous year's errors,



and today we have one of the most democratic and effective social programs in the history of the school.

Traffic in any school building, especially between classes, can be very disorderly. Since our school has classes in three separate buildings connected by corridors, traffic jams were once the rule instead of the exception. A council committee was given the job of handling this problem, and they now have it well in hand. Various members were stationed at the principal congestion points and asked to report back with their findings. By cooperative discussions of council members and other interested pupils-at-large, a set of traffic rules was temporarily drawn up for trial. Now most of the rules are permanent, and have been posted in each hall and on room bulletin boards.

Some members are asked to check daily the effectiveness of various regulations. They note the number of violators they see, and whether traffic has actually been improved under all conditions. The committee, through bulletins and assembly announcements, has tried to make all the pupils feel that this is their school and that they should contribute their part by cooperating wholeheartedly in eliminating the traffic problems. We believe that this attitude is much more helpful than dictatorial rules imposed from "above".

Last year an emergency arose, and it seemed advisable to form a student court to try traffic violators and other similar cases. Through the cooperation of our dean of boys, we publicized our intention and asked for interested pupils to sit in the court jury. A small, capable group met whenever necessary, and violators were summoned to appear before them. Previous to this the jury had been carefully informed of the best interviewing procedures, and told to make the defendant feel as much at ease as possible. After the technique was acquired by the jury, no faculty member was allowed to "sit in".

The purpose of this court was for pupils

to help the defendant clearly analyze his actions, and make him feel a sense of responsibility as a fellow member in our school. No penalties were imposed, and a record of the discussion was kept by the jury only for reference in case a second or third summons was later necessary for some other violation. No information was passed on to the school faculty, administration, or pupils in general concerning the discussions. Only in cases where no definite cooperation whatsoever could be obtained from the offender was a case referred to our dean of boys, who then handled it himself.

The court serves its purpose, and although it isn't perfect we feel it is much more effective and democratic than any school court we have heard of that actually functions.

About the time the student court began to function, many pupils felt that several controversial questions right in the school should be discussed freely by pupils and faculty in a round-table organization. Several topics were discussed, with a pupil chairman leading each discussion and a few interested faculty members in the background to interpret their side of certain questions when asked. Attendance was voluntary. Red-hot arguments resulted, and one outstanding discussion on Awards lasted three hours, with all members enthusiastically trying to get the floor. The whole arrangement was definitely pupil organized, pupil dominated, and was real democracy "at work".

This year we asked one of our social-science teachers to help in planning a series of Town-Hall Meetings, using two affirmative and two negative speakers to introduce the two sides of some controversial topic. Questions from the audience were then directed to the panel speakers, and a chairman attempted to coordinate and crystallize the various philosophies apparent.

The main question that might be called the theme of these meetings can be stated as follows: "Is our school democratic?" The



topic was picked by some representative members, and they asked the principal to be a member of the affirmative side at the first meeting. The other three members were interested pupils chosen at large from the school. Attendance at meetings is not compulsory, but an excellent representation has been present at each of the few we have had so far. The outcomes of one discussion determine the next discussion topic. Such a program helps any school to progress.

Each year our council has complete charge of all "homecoming" activities. This includes election of the homecoming queen, handling the parade and arrangements at the football game, and the homecoming dance. Pupil committees handle these with faculty advisers, but the principal ideas and proceedings are planned and carried out by pupils themselves. This year we also supervised an alumni-get-together which included an alumni-varsity basketball game, with a reception and dance following. This event took place during the Christmas vacation, when most of the alumni were home for the holidays. Exceptionally fine spirit prevailed, and it is a forward step to make the alumni feel that this is their school and that the present pupils are human beings after all.

We feel that another definite step in the right direction has been taken to bring our school and community much closer together. As a result of consistent attendance by several of our council members at the regular city council meetings, we hope to tie together more effectively the practicality of democratic procedures in the school itself as well as in the city.

The various pupils attending the council meetings bring reports back to the school. Naturally they acquaint their friends and parents with their findings, and so interpret both school and city government to many. Our city council has been very pleased with this cooperation and has permitted various pupils to sit beside the city officials' desks during actual meetings. We feel that such experiences help impress our school-council

members with the fact that democracy must stay "at work" to insure opportunity for individual as well as group progress. We are now planning to visit neighboring city councils and a session of the state legislature.

Many schools publish a student handbook yearly, explaining the nature of each club, athletic schedule, social schedule, building plan, etc. For the past two years several pupils have asked the council to look into the possibility of issuing one. The idea was discussed this year by a handbook committee, and as a result the pupils have worked out a way to finance this project and are now hard at work compiling our first student handbook. The publishing will also be done by the pupils.

In early May of each year our school invites pupils from the city grade schools for our annual "Visiting Day". Activities for this day are arranged by the council seniors who are more able in handling such things. In a special assembly the visitors are welcomed and the inner workings of the school explained to them. The rest of the day the visitors spend with classes they expect to attend the next year. This pupil welcome to and interpretation of our school is certainly a procedure worth keeping.

Several other specific examples might be listed here, but I believe the preceding paragraphs contain the council's most important outcomes thus far. Of course we do not have a perfect democratic student council, but that is the goal we are trying to approach.

It is quite important that the school administration be convinced of the necessity for a student council and a maximum amount of student voice in determining the policy of their school. We are very fortunate to have such an administration here and have our principal to thank for organizing and starting the school's first council four years ago.

We feel that our council members are making the most of the opportunities they have to show that democracy will work efficiently and effectively in the school.

# DEMOCRATIC ALGEBRA

An effective course at North Bend High School

By L. C. WRIGHT

TEACHER BROKE from traditional driving to make oral English democratic, attractive, and lifelike. So successful was he that his pupils seized every opportunity to participate in—and even control—student affairs. So evident was their enthusiasm and growth that other teachers challenged: "That's all right for a class in speech, but just try something less spectacular and less wanted by youth."

Good American stock could never ignore the taunt of such a challenge. The need is so great; so many future citizens are learning to shun the difficult way because of its drabness; so many seek the "snap" courses for equal fame; the fame (credit) is of such questionable and papery worth. How can we entice our youth to the beauties of the mountain peaks?

In fear and trembling, another teacher



EDITOR'S NOTE: *If democratic practices are to pervade every part of the high school and its work, then even such strongholds of tradition as algebra and Latin must be included in the process. In this article, Mr. Wright, superintendent of schools in North Bend, Wash., reports upon the success of North Bend High School's democratic algebra course. This program is no experiment, since it is now going into its seventh year. Pupils have much to say about the problems to be studied. They work together toward goals of their own choice. And the course seems to be remarkably popular, even among pupils who have no mathematics bent.*

in North Bend High School faced his algebra pupils and cut loose: "You may choose your own text and your own path—your own route and rate of travel. Some will want to go the highways, some the steepes, and some will take the switchbacks. There is fun and challenge in every step. You may step firmly upon a rock only to find that it rolls from under you. You'll be more cautious next time for you'll recall the bruise. We'll learn to take the bumps, but we'll do better—we'll learn to be more observing and evade them."

Successful? Well, the method has continued with occasional new adventures for the past six years. On Mondays and Wednesdays pupils arrive and fall to work as they enter the field of activity. They signal the guide (teacher) as they need him, and he hurries to them to ask thought-provoking questions that may help light to dawn, or shares the surprises newly observed by those traveling this way for the first time. A good guide will not point out everything that he has known so long. He must newly enjoy and newly wonder; he must stoop to the novice's level if he would really lend lifting power.

Every one of these forty youths climbs consistently for the entire hour. Never is there any "waiting for teacher" to assign, direct, and drive. Some revel in speed while many glory in time—enough time for thinking without panicky driving. Some blooms receive but passing glances from the speedy, but demand analytical study from the more thoughtful.

On Tuesday morning the guide points the way into new fields and inspires to greater

heights. The more advanced pupils assist, for they radiate enthusiasm naturally. If the guide is detained elsewhere, he does not worry, for his assistants start their revelations of the new experiences even before the period bell's call-to-order.

Thursday is known as achievement day, and all pupils step to the board to demonstrate problems which they have newly mastered or those which have "downed" them. Demonstrations by slow pupils draw discussion to hard spots along the way and thus furnish review for those who have gone hurriedly to the heights. Demonstrations by the advanced, introducing new terminology, new difficulties, and new tricks, keep the slower ones reaching into the unknown.

The alert attitude of both slow and fast is a thrill to the traditional teacher who usually works against resistance. Eyes and minds—and even mouths—are open as all try to discover a statement or sign that can be challenged. A decided contrast is observed when teacher demonstrates, for many pupils hesitate to challenge teacher through courtesy, and some fear speaking out, knowing that they cannot trust their judgment against teacher's. Teacher is too distant and hard to tune to; fellow-pupils are on a similar wave-length.

As one pupil wrote in his final, "A problem often seems impossible to me till a fellow-student makes it so clear and simple." Too, a teacher becomes less important as he continues on and on at great length. A continuous change of pupils does not tax the attention span, and makes for variety and interest.

*Results.* Much of the procedure and accomplishment may be on a lower quantity level, but each pupil does his own thinking and feels a stimulating power and a new capacity for coming through. Asked by a visitor how he liked the new method, a large, over-aged youth who had proceeded to page 84, while many of his colleagues were on page 200, blurted in a loud voice, "It's the best thing that ever happened!"

Two years before, he had failed in arithmetic and hated school, had dropped out and run the streets.

Better attitudes could never be found than those of six boys who this year made consistent attack and drive. All experienced failure in arithmetic, but all claimed they liked algebra when going at their own rates of understanding. Let Doug speak for himself as he did in his final:

"This last semester I have enjoyed algebra immensely. As a matter of fact, I can sincerely state that it was my favorite subject. I can't understand this because of my whole-hearted dislike for arithmetic, which, like algebra, is a form of mathematics. The only plausible explanation for this is the way algebra was made interesting by our Thursday recitations."

Over and over have we heard them say, "I like algebra best of all" in such a way as to reveal new confidence in their power to devise, organize, and come through.

Freshmen are told that they need not take algebra and are offered junior mathematics, but every pupil chooses algebra. Some cover less than enough to warrant success in a college engineering course. However, they do gain insight and feel a power and confidence upon which they can later build if they have the desire. Most of them will never use even that which they have already mastered.

Every year the instructor asks the class, "How many would have preferred a more socialized recitation, with teacher demonstrating more of the hard spots on the board?" Never yet has a pupil answered in the affirmative. All prefer the present method of individual attack, time to think through, sense of challenge, defeat, and success.

"The unit of real education is the completed job of one's own." Democracy, and democracy's leaders, should ever keep this in mind.

*Postscript.* After this article was completed, it was submitted to Joe, who has just completed a course in algebra in a large high school of a metropolitan city. Joe's

reaction was, "I've always hated algebra because it has no personality. I don't like subjects that have no personality. Every day it's just another cord of wood the teacher shoves at you. It doesn't matter whether the knife's sharp or not. It has to be cut up. There's no chance for the personality of the teacher or the student."

Well, Joe, when we climbed the old mountain it was the same sort of grind. But we did enjoy the short-cuts we found. We took time to enjoy the new lookouts; we laughed about how quickly and how flatly we fell upon that slippery rock. That bear scared us, and that drenching was chilling, but we wouldn't miss those experiences now for anything. Algebra is like that.

But we mustn't climb the same hill all the time. Don't work all the same problems after they become monotonous. Cinch the method and then find a problem that looks formidable. Gloat in new ability to man-

handle those helpless formulas. Even taunt them, as one pupil did in devising a long, involved problem in fractions and cancellation that resolved itself into the instructor's initials for an answer. Another pupil constructed a problem that found its answer in "YES". A third boy devised one with "NO" for an answer. So intriguing and exciting does algebra make itself that a pupil coming into the class to continue her arithmetic, which she had started in a distant school, preferred to play with algebra, and quickly became one of the class to finish her requirement in half time.

Personality? Young America can't resist. We must not accept continuous and monotonous woodcutting. There is a lure to streamlined democracy, and teachers must respond to that lure; there is a lure to the strange manipulation of figures, and it must not be denied our citizens-in-the-making. Let's have civic teamwork even in algebra!



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## FINDINGS

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**LIBERALISM:** An opinionaire designed to determine the comparative liberalism of public attitudes of business men and educators was answered by 711 "eminent business executives" and 65 "distinguished progressive educators". Result: A mean "liberalism" index of 19 for the businessmen contrasted with a similar figure of 53 for the educators. The two highly selected groups were attitudinally distinct, since 100% of the educators exceeded the average "liberalism" of the executives, reports George W. Hartmann in *Psychological Bulletin*.

**MAGAZINES:** And now comes a report on the favorite magazines of 16,000 high-school boys and girls in 13 states, polled by the Camp Fire Girls of America. In order of preference: *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, movie magazines (apparently assorted) and *Look*. After meditating over this list in a dark room with doors locked, we emerge with the conclusion that high-school pupils like articles with little or no reading matter.

**BIOLOGY:** To 1,167 pupils taking biology in 3 New York City high schools was given a questionnaire concerning biology topics and teaching methods, reports Nathan S. Washton in *School Sci-*

*ence and Mathematics*. Asked to check the most interesting of 33 listed biology topics, about 22% checked Evolution; 28%, Man (structure and function); 28%, Heredity. The remaining 22% scattered feeble choices over the other 30 topics. The author suggests that biology courses be centered more strongly around the 3 topics which so overwhelmingly represent pupils' chief interests. Other findings: 63% of pupils want printed assignments, 37% oral assignments; and 93% stated that outdoor biology classes and visits to parks would make the subject more interesting.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Good, bad, indifferent, or important, there is a great amount of counting studies and other research going on in the field of education. We think readers will be interested in brief, unqualified summaries of some main points in some of the findings. Lack of space prohibits much explanation of methods used, degree of accuracy or conclusiveness, and sometimes even the scope of the study. Readers granting such limitations may find these flashes in the pan interesting, provocative—sometimes amusing.



# HOME ECONOMICS:

## Parker girls serve the community

By  
MARTHA G. TEMPLETON

**E**DUCATION BEGINS at home. The child who goes to school for six hours a day and spends the other eighteen hours in an undesirable home or community will not be the type of citizen stimulated by the school. The things we live with make the greatest impressions.

The homes of our boys and girls provide the school with a practical and economical homemaking laboratory. The physical aspects of the home provide a laboratory for nutrition, gardening, child training, interior decoration, clothing, money management, health and mathematics. The social life in the home is the logical practice ground for the development of personality.

Many people have recognized these possibilities, but the best way to make use of the home as a teaching device for the school

has long been the problem. Although home economics has done something in this direction through the use of home projects, these projects in operation are too often artificial—they are too often a requirement of the teacher rather than a need of the pupil.

The Parker District High School of Greenville, S.C., is using the home to advantage in a two-fold manner. The school goes into the homes and the community to help solve problems in their natural situation or, if possible, brings the problems into the school and encourages family groups to use the facilities of the school. The school recognizes that education knows no age limits. If the fundamental aim, "to raise the standard of living", is to be accomplished, education must be made available to all people.

This school began its program by offering the community such services as facilities and supervision for recreation, forums for discussion of community-wide problems, an opportunity to hear good music and participate in dramatics, to try their hand with arts and crafts, and assistance with any individual problems.

The home economics department, in co-operation with the state department of education and specialists in the fields of music, recreation, and dramatics, acts in an advisory capacity. There is one full-time teacher of home economics who helps to coordinate the adult and the day-school programs. The child is a part of a family group and problems of the family affect the child. Many such problems are adult problems and must be solved with adults.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Home economics is democratic at Parker District High School, Greenville, S.C. The home-economics department draws no sharp line between its registered pupils and local housewives who need advice. A housewife is welcome to bring her homemaking problems right into the school. Nor is there any rigid distinction between classwork done in the school's home-economics rooms and that which can be done in a local home, as a practical service to the community. The homes of the neighborhood are the school's homemaking laboratories. And the girls learn citizenship while they learn curtain making and pie baking. Mrs. Templeton teaches home economics in the school.*



One child would not ask his friends into his home because, as he said, "The homes of my friends are so much nicer than mine. They have better furniture. I can't ask them here." The mother was hurt to think that her son was ashamed of his home, but it made her realize that her home needed to be improved. Later, when discussing with friends the attitude of her son, someone suggested that she call the high school and ask for advice on improving her home. A few slip covers, made with the assistance of high-school girls, new curtains, and a different arrangement gave that home the "new look" the boy envied in friends' homes.

Once the school has the confidence of a family, all kinds of problems are presented to it. The most frequent questions relate to food, child training, health, and renovation of furniture, but questions of family relationships and money management are not uncommon. In fact, the first introduction to budgeting often arises from just such situations as the one previously related.

The first conference on a problem probably results in planning what should be done. If money is involved, it is suggested that the money be saved over a period of time or that one thing be done at a time—one chair recovered one week, curtains made later. Few people stop with the solution of one problem. One thing leads to another and the process of education goes on. This is the most gratifying result of the program.

Formal classes for adults are a common practice, but their possibilities are limited. They are usually held in the schools or community centers—and at best these are unnatural situations. The home is the natural place for solving problems of home

living. Working in the homes does not limit the number of people who benefit from the services of the school. Friends and neighbors always come in to help, and in this way it is possible to get at the real needs of individuals. Families who are pleased with the assistance given by the school are its best advertisement.

In one community of the fourteen that make up Parker District, a family asked for help in landscaping their yard and planning a vegetable garden. A group of high-school pupils interested in gardens, and a teacher, met with the family in their yard, planned the new arrangement, dug up the old shrubbery, and rearranged it to make space for a vegetable garden. The pupils gained confidence in their new-found knowledge and developed a civic pride in their communities because they were of service to the community. Interest in gardening spread because of this one attractive, economical garden, and other families asked for assistance from the school.

It would be impossible to estimate the number of homes using the facilities of the school and providing the pupils of the school with the opportunity to "learn by doing". In the four years this program has been in force, there has been a constant demand for assistance from the homes. A program of dramatics, music, arts and crafts, and camping has resulted from the work with individuals on their needs and interests. It has created a better understanding of the child for the home and the school, the adult for the child and the school, and the school for the home, and it is through activities that contribute to mutual betterment that desirable qualities of citizenship are developed.



### *Superman's Booklist*

According to the Boys Athletic League's annual preference survey, Superman turns out to be the favorite character, and comic strips the favorite reading of a big percentage of 17,000 boys and girls,

ages 8 to 20. . . . Reminds us that one librarian managed to supply young readers with literature of solid worth by use of a placard—"Superman Recommends These Books".—*New York Times*.

# PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES IN DEMOCRACY

Ideas in brief—condensed from reports on schools’  
practices in *Learning the Ways of Democracy*

## *Landscaping a Community*

One of the continuing projects of Ellerbe, N.C., High School is the beautification of homes and church grounds of the community, as well as school property itself. Some years ago the principal took pupils to estates in a neighboring community to get cuttings of shrubs and other plants for improvement of the school grounds. By spring hundreds of the plants had rooted and could be moved to open ground. The attractive school grounds that resulted interested parents in similar work for their own homes. Today, thousands of plants and shrubs have been grown by pupils in the school nursery and transplanted to the grounds surrounding homes and churches of the community. A class in landscaping is a part of the school program. Here pupils learn the proper arrangement of walks, shrubs, vines, and trees. Ellerbe, a rural village of modest homes, has been transformed into a place of beauty by the school’s young landscape architects and their crews of workers.

## *Student Health Committee*

Campaigns for better health practices are conducted regularly among the student body by the Student Health Committee of Carpinteria, Cal., High School. This group is a standing committee of the student council, responsible for health propaganda and projects. One such project of the Committee was a tuberculosis testing program, in which, it was hoped, all pupils would take part. When the Committee found that some pupils hadn’t taken the test, members visited the parents of the hold-

outs, well equipped with answers to objections. A school-wide practice resulting from the Committee’s recommendation is a 10-minute intermission each morning, during which orange juice and crackers are sold. Pupils who don’t buy juice nevertheless benefit from the opportunity to relax. The Committee was given the duty of selecting classroom thermometers. After a study of standards and a comparison of competing brands, the Committee chose the thermometer it considered best. Whenever there’s a matter of health protection to be sold to the student body, this public-spirited pupil committee goes to work.

## *Social Action in Des Moines*

Pupils in Des Moines, Ia., high schools are encouraged to engage in social action out in the community whenever their study of any subject in school leads naturally to a desire to do something about it. A Roosevelt High School class studying types of city government became interested in the question, “Should Des Moines have a city-manager government?” The pupils amassed information by writing to cities that have this form of government. They found that a change in the city charter was necessary before Des Moines could have a city-manager, and that this change could be initiated by a petition. Pupils of 2 other high schools were enlisted in the project. A group of 50 pupils drew up a petition, mimeographed it, and went forth in search of signatures and recruits. In 3 months they had 4,500 signatures, half the number required. At this point the petition was turned over to an adult organization for completion. It was made clear that the schools were not advocating the change, that pupils were working on their own time and initiative. In another Roosevelt High School class, statistics on the small per cent of qualified voters who go to the polls resulted in a pupil get-out-the-vote campaign. More than 200 pupils solicited 6,000 persons in the school district, urging qualified voters to register and vote. Pupils appeared before clubs, in forums, on the radio. They obtained space in the papers. And on the Saturday before election they planned and staged an impressive parade through the downtown districts.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: This is our regular department, “Ideas in Brief”, but it is retitled for this occasion because all of the items on these two pages were chosen to fit in with our special section of articles on “Practical Experiences in Democracy”. These reports were selected and condensed by our staff from many dozens of procedures reported in *Learning the Ways of Democracy*, a case book in civic education, published by the Educational Policies Commission, Washington, D.C., 486 pages, \$1.

### *Story of Civil Liberties*

The teaching of the civil liberties is one of the least developed and most important fields for work of curriculum makers. In grade 12 social-studies classes of Cleveland, Ohio, high schools, "Civil Rights—Significance and Repression" is a topic of a unit on public opinion. The history and meaning of Anglo-Saxon liberties, from Magna Charta to the Bill of Rights in the U. S. Constitution are studied. After covering early examples of repression of civil rights, classes deal with such recent restrictions as suppressions in California, activities among the share-croppers, the Tom Mooney and the Scottsboro cases. The topic is concluded with a study of the comparative position of civil liberties in democracies, and under communism, socialism, and fascism.

### *Faculty Democracy*

Teachers of Moultrie, Ga., High School have the major responsibility for shaping the school's educational policies and curriculum. Faculty meetings are held one evening a week. The elected chairman of the faculty presides, and the superintendent and the principal take part as regular members of the group. Teachers of freshmen meet weekly, as do teachers of sophomores, to plan parallel topics for the different subject-classes. Faculty meetings thus occupy 4 to 5 hours a week. But the teachers are in favor of devoting that much time. "As far as faculty meetings are concerned we are the administration."

### *Unit on Youth Problems*

"Youth Faces the Modern World" is the first unit taught in the modern problems course in grade 12 of the Cleveland, Ohio, high schools. It suggests activities, projects, and readings through which young people may examine the social situation in which youth finds itself today. The unit covers the statistics concerning youth in our population, the status of American youth (employment, education, marriage, crime), youth movements in foreign lands, the American youth "problem", youth movements and organizations, and efforts to aid youth. The unit is an orientation to the study of modern problems, and an attempt to recognize and clarify the point of view of youth.

### *Safety and Individual Worth*

A unit on safety taught in grade 7 in the schools of Schenectady, N.Y., begins with the importance of the individual and the value of the individual

to society as seen by parents, insurance companies, courts of law, and governmental institutions as indicated by their expenditures for human welfare. This approach illustrates the possibility of introducing material on human worth and dignity—often assumed but not often definitely expressed in teaching—in the study of modern problems.

### *"Democracy and Competitors"*

A school program that emphasizes democratic living for its pupils is essential—but so also is a program that requires pupils to be thoughtfully conscious of their experience and able to understand its significance. With this belief, Roosevelt High School, Des Moines, Ia., offers 12th-grade pupils a one-year course in modern problems. About the first third of the year is devoted to a unit on "Democracy and Its Competitors". In this unit pupils study the background of the struggle between democracy and dictatorship; the meaning of democracy, nazism, fascism, and communism; the governments of countries typifying each form; and communism, fascism, and nazism in the Western Hemisphere. The final topic of the unit, out of which the work of the remaining two-thirds of the course develops, is "Preserving and improving democracy in the United States". The following obstacles and threats to democracy are studied under this topic: war; inefficiency and corruption in government; unemployment; crime; race prejudice; inadequate health services; inadequate purchasing power and maldistribution of wealth; waste or misuse of natural resources; and poor housing. For the remainder of the year the class doesn't study a series of disconnected "modern problems", but devotes its time to a more intensive consideration of the 9 obstacles and threats, in relation to a central issue—the preservation and improvement of American democracy.

### *"Employer and Employee"*

"Employer and Employee" is a unit in the modern problems course in Cleveland, Ohio, high schools. It includes teaching materials on the history, status, and forms of labor unions, the demands and policies of organized laborers and organized employers, and the weapons of economic warfare and tools of economic cooperation.

### *Community Mathematics*

A mathematics class of Waynesboro, Va., High School centered a semester's study on local taxation, revenue and expenditures, and the services received by the public in return for its money.

# 75 VISITS

"Sell Dana"—our program  
of school interpretation

## from Community LEADERS

By GERALD M. WELLER

**S**HORTLY AFTER his appointment as principal of Dana Junior High School in San Pedro, Mr. Cedric Stannard felt that the development of a plan of school interpretation to community leaders should be the first of a series of major forward steps to be undertaken. Not that the Los Angeles City School District was neglecting the field of public relations. On the contrary, for some four years, under the leadership of Superintendent Vierling Kersey, great strides had already been taken in this area.

Broadcasts explaining the ideals and purposes of the schools were being sponsored regularly by the Board of Education. In 1938 the superintendent's office published an attractively-illustrated 160-page report to patrons entitled *Your Children and Their Schools*, which explained and pictorially described the citywide educational program. Individual schools were holding "Open

House", and presenting special programs during American Education Week in the fall, and Public Schools Week in the Spring.

Parent-Teacher meetings were enlivened by outstanding speakers and enticing exhibits and demonstrations of pupil activities. In addition, parents and community were kept informed of school matters through the local press, school newspapers, handbooks, newer-type report cards, readable printed courses of study, vitalized commencements, and many of the other methods commonly in vogue.

It was felt, however, that important as these methods were, they were not enough. They needed supplementing with a parallel program of interpretation and explanation directed toward those individuals—group leaders and other key people in the community—who have so much to do with the actual shaping of public opinion and public attitudes.

The modern community's numerous organized adult groups possess great influence in the social milieu, oftentimes far out of proportion to the size of their memberships. Knowing them and their leaders ought to be a most important responsibility of school officials.

If the school would take these particular people into its confidence and carry its message to them in a sincere, personal way, they would undoubtedly be both better qualified and more inclined to support actively the educational program. Furthermore, a genuine spirit of sympathetic understanding, and intelligent, wholehearted cooperation should become evident in the institutional relationships developed. Our problem was

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EDITOR'S NOTE: "*Dana Junior High School's program of school interpretation to community leaders*," writes Mr. Weller, "is unique in the Los Angeles School District, and nowhere in educational literature have I seen anything similar to it." This plan is not a mass-production affair. Although 150 guests from 100 local organizations were entertained during the past year, the plan called for only two visitors on a single day. They received the individual attention of selected pupils, teachers, and administrators, according to the carefully developed schedule explained in this article. Mr. Weller is boys' vice-principal of Dana Junior High School, San Pedro, Cal.



to find effective ways of reaching these persons and of bringing them into the schools to meet teachers and administrative officers, to see for themselves the educational program in operation.

The answer seemed to be to invite them to visit the school at a specific time, personally conduct them throughout the plant so they could see every phase of the program, have them lunch with pupils and teachers, and before leaving, meet and briefly chat with the administrative staff. This, in general, was the plan of school-community interpretation about to be described.

The first step was to make a survey of San Pedro to determine what organized groups existed with whom contact should be made. San Pedro is a port city of 45,000. It is highly cosmopolitan, with Scandinavians, Slavs, Japanese and Mexicans predominate among its foreign born. It is a highly organized community—more than one hundred important groups were found to be functioning actively. A card index file was prepared, listing each organization with the names and addresses of its officers.

A Public Relations Hospitality Committee of pupils and faculty members was then formed to handle all the details of the luncheons to be held two or three times each week. The principal felt most fortunate in obtaining as sponsor hostess a faculty woman who had lived in San Pedro for years and knew the community intimately. Moreover, she had those qualities of graciousness, charm and poise which are essential to the successful functioning of work of this type. Hers was the responsibility of carrying through all the necessary arrangements for invitations, pupil guides, faculty guests, menus, and decorations, and acting as hostess during the luncheon.

Next on the schedule was a meeting of upper-division pupils, especially those natural leaders who were student body officers, student council members, presidents of homerooms, and heads of service and other student groups and organizations. Some 60

boys and girls reported and were asked to state their ambitions, hobbies, sports, activities after school, clubs and other organizations to which they or their parents belonged, their parents' hobbies, occupations, and racial and religious background.

The purposes of the new program were carefully explained to them and they were led to realize that the interpretation of the school to the community was a responsibility of pupils as well as faculty, superintendent and school board. The specific part they were to play was to meet and welcome guests upon their arrival at around eleven in the morning, and then escort them on a tour of the school plant, explaining everything carefully and answering all questions to the best of their ability. With their help a standard itinerary was worked out which would cover all parts of the plant and every possible phase of the educational program. To guests, this had the great advantage of enabling them to see the school in actual, everyday running order, and not on dress parade as is so commonly the practice.

It was the teacher-hostess' endeavor to select pupils for each tour and luncheon whose background and interests closely paralleled those of prospective guests, thereby insuring the utmost congeniality and compatibility. In practice, the pupils making up the committee proved to be a sampling of the racial mixture of the community at large. Faculty members for each guest day were chosen from a list compiled in a manner similar to that used for pupils.

The hostess first made contact with individual group leaders either personally or by telephone. Preliminary arrangements made, a letter was written extending an invitation to visit the school and remain as a luncheon guest. A brief outline of the day's schedule was included and different dates were suggested from which a selection might be made. It is worth noting that an invitation was rarely refused, and even then another member of the organization would be suggested to attend.

Luncheons were ordinarily served for eight people—two community leaders, the boy and girl pupil guides, two teachers, one administrator, and the hostess. Meals were substantially the same as those provided in the cafeteria on the same day, and were served by the girls in the foods classes. (This provided excellent training and experience in homemaking, and these classes became so popular that waiting lists were set up for each semester.) Conversation during each meal was skilfully led by the hostess in such a manner as to touch upon common interests of all concerned, pupils and adults alike, so as to create a happy, friendly, natural situation, with all completely at ease.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, guests were escorted back to the administrative offices for a brief, informal chat with the principal. Before leaving they were presented with copies of a recently published booklet entitled "Your Junior High School". This brochure gives a concise and comprehensive statement of the purposes of the junior high school.

An account of each visit, with the names and some interesting personal facts about the guests, always appeared in the next edition of the school paper, copies of which were mailed to the visitors. The local press also carried accounts of the visits.

The reaction of the community to this program of educational interpretation has been most favorable. The school has become real and vital to outside people. Community leaders leave with clear and intelligent ideas of what the school is trying to do for boys and girls. This changed point of view is well illustrated by the following brief, typical comments from "bread and butter" letters received by the hostess after visits:

"I was particularly impressed with the efficient manner in which the school is operated. . . ."

"Your pupil representatives were so delightful. They seemed to know what goes on in the school and simply radiated enthusiasm."

"It was a most interesting and enjoyable two

hours, and an experience every citizen should be privileged to enjoy. I certainly believe these informal visits are of the utmost importance to the community."

"I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and brought away with me a new picture of what the school is doing."

"Having been paying taxes for the support of schools here for years, I am certainly very appreciative of the opportunity afforded me today to see at first hand how the tax dollar is spent at Dana Junior High School."

The faculty has broadened under the program and has developed a clearer understanding of and keener insight into community problems and the desirability of promoting closer relations. Friendships between faculty members and people of the community have developed, and many have sought membership in local groups of one sort or another.

Pupils enjoy the work immensely. There is always a long waiting list for membership on the committee. They vie with one another in "selling Dana" to friends, patrons, and any others who will listen. There seems to be in evidence a greater spirit of courtesy, consideration and helpfulness for other pupils, as well as a more evident display of good manners throughout the school.

It is the principal's opinion that the program has demonstrated itself as sufficiently sound and successful to warrant its consideration as a regular part of the school's program. Because most organizations change their leadership from year to year there will be little repetition of individual guests.

Last year 150 guests, representing not less than 100 organizations, were entertained at 75 luncheons. If as many people are met in this significantly personal way each year, over a period of time a most impressive group of forceful, enthusiastic, understanding friends of public education will be built up. With people of this stamp personally acquainted with teachers and administrators and reliably informed about the aims, ideals and accomplishments of the schools, public education need have no fears for the future.

# WHAT I WANT *of my* PRINCIPAL

*A teacher adds to Esther  
Sellie's April article*

By MARTHA BUCHER

WHAT DO I want of my principal? What do the thirty-five other teachers in the building want of our principal? What do teachers everywhere want of their principals? These were the questions raised in my mind after reading Esther Sellie's "Supervisory Helps: What a Teacher Desires of a Principal" in the April 1941 CLEARING HOUSE.

Time and time again we teachers have been told what our principals want of us, but rarely have they been told what we want of them. It is quite likely that many principals would like to know what their teachers really want, that they would welcome constructive suggestions from them.

After reading the one article on what a teacher desires of a principal, I felt that someone should add to it, for if a principal

were to answer all the desires expressed therein he might still fail to create an atmosphere conducive to teaching in its highest form.

What do I, a classroom teacher with years of experience and the required number of degrees, want?

Unlike the writer of the previously mentioned article, I do not crave tactful supervision of my teaching above all else; neither do I crave having my principal treat me as a hostess when he enters or leaves my classroom; nor, fond as I am of coffee, do I crave having coffee served in his private office as we confer upon my teaching.

Instead, above everything else, I want someone to bolster my morale by saying those words we've been promised we'll hear when the Final Reports are handed in, "Well done." I want to hear those words now and then during the year. I can assure any principal they will pay dividends unsurpassed by any other investment he could make.

I want him to realize that I, too, am wholeheartedly interested in the welfare of the school, that I shall do all in my power to become a specialist in my own particular subject, and should, therefore, like to be treated as a specialist.

I want him to remember always that "comparisons are odious" and to refrain from comparing me, audibly at least, with my fellow workers.

I want him to take time now and then to share with me the human interest stories with which a classroom abounds. I want him to laugh with me at the many little humorous happenings around us.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Bucher writes, "Many of the women members of the faculty of Central Junior High School, Kansas City, Kan., read Esther Sellie's 'Supervisory Helps: What a Teacher Desires of a Principal' in the April 1941 CLEARING HOUSE. It started us on a discussion of what we would like of our principal. We did not agree with all of Miss Sellie's main points, and added some 'wants' of our own. I wrote an informal article on the results of our discussions. So many teachers and principals here in Kansas City wanted copies that it was suggested I submit the manuscript to THE CLEARING HOUSE." The editors of CH will be glad to consider other articles that add to, or disagree with, points made by Miss Sellie and Miss Bucher.

During lunch period or any free moment I want him to be willing to discuss world affairs with me. At this time I want intellectual equality. At other times I want to be treated as a woman. This means that when called to his office to consult on some disciplinary measure I want him to rise as I enter, thus not only setting a standard for the problem youth but also letting him see that even the principal treats me with respect. Absurd? Perhaps, but anyway I want it.

I want him to have the unbiased judgment of a father of both boys and girls, for only in that way will he be able to judge without prejudice the many boy and girl problems that are certain to come up in any junior high school attended by children of both sexes.

I want him to be well groomed, poised, courteous, and not too busy to stop and chat for a few minutes with the infrequent visitors I have at school. As most of us women teachers are denied the satisfaction of saying proudly, "This is my husband,"

I want the compensation of saying proudly, "This is my principal."

There may be some who will sniff at what I want. Educational background, reading tastes, methods of running the school have not been mentioned. No, for in an up-to-date school system all these qualities have been considered by those who do the hiring. To obtain a position as principal in such a school district, a man must be educated and trained for his work. If he has been, he will enjoy reading and keeping up; he will know how to run his school efficiently and how to supervise his teachers effectively. Important as these things are, they do not interest me most. Instead it's the many personal characteristics of my principal that are most important to me—for well do I know that they may make a teacher's work thrilling or uninteresting and her life happy or a nightmare.

Do I want too much? I think not. I now have a principal who lacks only one quality of the theoretically perfect principal—he is the father of sons but has no daughters.



## Recently They Said:

### *Around the Corner*

The English teacher plays the role of coach, cheer-leader, and umpire in the thrilling game of learning to use reading and language as tools and sources of recreation. As she changes roles upon an instantaneous cue from the pupil, the teacher must retain her sense of humor, sense of values, and sense of beauty in order not to be confused by conflicting educational theories, fatigued by her heavy teaching load, and distressed by the seeming futility of educating youth to enter a world in which life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness may for their generation be only a vicarious experience.—ANGELA M. BROENING in *The Texas Outlook*.

### *Convention St. Vitus*

Since there are so many people eager to do research problems in the name of education why not examine this one? Why can teachers not sit through convention sessions? Do they have a short span of attention? Is it a physical necessity that drives them out? Does the shopping urge get

them? Have they no consideration for those who do want to listen or is it just a case of bad manners? —JULIA KING in *Ohio Schools*.

### *Science and War*

Science is still in the "Ivory Tower", to the extent that our laborers, our farmers, and even our leaders in politics, trade, and industry do not understand, or at least do not follow the scientific method. Hence I insist that ours is not yet an age of science, for the character of the age is writ by man's behavior. Men are still driven by greed and confused by guile, rather than guided by reason and justice based on our expanding scientific knowledge. Still, we cannot deny the possibility, and we will nurse the hope, that the hairy ape who somehow lost his tail, grew a brain worth having, built speech and song out of a hiss and roar, and stepped out of the cave to explore and master the universe, may some day conquer his own irrational and myopic behavior toward his kin.—ANTON J. CARLSON, University of Chicago physiologist, in commencement address at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



# 53 STANDS

*Boise High School's  
Trouping Theatre*

## IN ONE SEASON

By

HELEN MAYER FARRER

FIFTY-THREE PERFORMANCES in one season! That is the record that Boise High School's advanced dramatics class has chalked up this year as a Children's Trouping Theatre. "Learn to act by acting" was the method used in this project.

As a result of this season's activities, enrolment in the advanced dramatics class has become so popular that selection and restriction of class membership for the coming fall class had to be instigated. To facilitate trouping the class must necessarily be limited to not more than fifteen pupils. Members of the class must not be afraid of hard work—for that is what trouping is, as well as lots of fun, as old professional troupers will testify.

Perhaps I should first give you an idea of the "how come" of Boise High's Trouping Players. For the past nine years some of the children of the city have had the pleasure of attending one annual children's play, sponsored by the Boise Junior League. The purpose of the presentation was to

bring to the children a play within their grasp and within their interest—something pleasurable, cultural, and educational. Under this regime such plays as "Heidi", "The Steadfast Tin Soldier", "Racketty-Packetty House", and "The Patchwork Girl of Oz" were presented with a great deal of success.

The productions were always large, lavish ones involving such expenses for royalties, costumes and scenery that there had to be an admission charge. Because of this charge many a poor child was deprived of the privilege of attending. The plays were given in the high school auditorium, far removed from the homes of some of the rural children, so a child was often unable to attend for this reason.

Too, the school authorities, plus the principals and the teachers, objected to the disturbance caused by the program, in that all children were not able to attend, yet the teachers must accompany and supervise those able to go. The task of disciplining 1,500 unrestrained grade-school children at a two-hour show is not an easy one, as anyone who has tried this difficult task will agree.

Somehow the system of entertaining the grade-school child needed correcting. Our present method was not reaching the children. The Junior League play chairman and the writer conceived the idea of continuing the play program, but taking the play to the grade-school children and using high-school talent instead of busy and disinterested League members. Why not use enthusiastic high-school pupils who *want* to act? Why not transform the advanced dramatics class into a group of traveling players

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The ten elementary schools of Boise, Idaho, form the circuit of the Boise High School Trouping Theatre. Its members are the fifteen pupils enrolled in the school's advanced dramatics class. Last year they made the circuit of the elementary schools ten times, with five different plays selected for cultural value and appeal to small children. Performances are on class time, and this calls for a truck, and hair-trigger organization. How this unusual program is financed and operated is Mrs. Farrer's story. She is dramatics instructor in the school.*

to take the plays from school to school?

And so we have our children's Trouping Theatre, which is a cooperative project of the Boise Junior League and the high-school dramatics department. After this, our first year of trouping, we submit to you the results.

As a cooperative venture, the division of labor is as follows: the major portion of the expenses are borne by the League. Costume expenses are minimized by the use of costumes of the dramatics department and of former Junior League productions. These were adapted to current needs by a group of League women comprising the costume committee. Colorful costumes are in order for each of the shows, for children love the world of make-believe, and what helps create this illusion more effectively than fantastic characters and costumes?

The League ladies also had a property committee who were responsible for producing accurate, necessary "props"—not always an easy task.

Then again, the League did its part in having at least one member on hand at each performance to help in any emergency. This emergency often took the form either of using private cars, or producing taxis, to transport the troupers in bad weather.

As for the part the high school played in this project—first of all, it furnished the actors, an unselected group of pupils who had inadvertently, or otherwise, signed up for the advanced dramatics course. They soon were to discover that this was not the usual "snap" dramatics course, for it involved plenty of action in whatever capacity they served for the day—be it leading lady or scene-shifter.

The class members themselves have either designed or helped in the designing of all the settings for all the repertoire. Two or three of the members who had art training were especially adept at the execution of the ideas. This phase of the production was handled exclusively by the troupers themselves.

The production of certain unusual properties was also effectively worked out by the class, such as manufacturing the musical saucepan for "The Princess and the Swineherd". Great pride was shown when a particularly inventive design was produced.

One of the most important contributions made by the school system was the loan of the school-district truck and a capable, licensed driver. The truck was on hand in rain or shine to take the actors, properties and scenery to and from the grade schools. This meant fifty-two trips, or, counting to and fro, one hundred and four trips—no small contribution.

Perhaps some of you would like to know in detail just how this trouping theatre functioned. It happened that the advanced dramatics class was scheduled for the period following the noon hour. But after all, we needed more than a forty-five minute period for all that we had to do, so how nicely the noon hour could be and was utilized. On trouping days lunches were brought from home or eaten in the school cafeteria, for no time could be wasted—there was work to be done! Make-up had to be skilfully applied, costumes carefully donned, the truck loaded with actors, properties and scenery, and then away we would go to the scheduled elementary school.

Here the scenery and properties were unloaded, the stage set, and everything made ready for a one o'clock show. After the performance the truck was again loaded, the homeward trek made, the scenery handled again for a fourth time, costumes and make-up removed, and all this by 1:40 o'clock, in time for the next class! It took speed, but it could be done!

By using two or even three casts, each pupil may play one or perhaps two roles during the run of a play, and work on some vital production phase also. Thus, alternating acting with production tasks, these high-school actors are having invaluable practical experience.

This alternate cast system served two

main purposes—to insure us against a short cast in case of illness, and to give everyone an opportunity to act. Needless to say, it served to heighten the quality of the acting too, since it aroused the competitive spirit among the players. Willie did his very best with his role when it was his turn, lest Johnny (who shared the role for a certain number of showings) outdo him in his part.

When not acting the "idle" pupil has much responsibility in the production end of the game, for the trouping players not only do the acting, they run the show. There is no outside help. The pupils have proved themselves entirely capable of handling the lights, curtain, prompting, off-stage music and effects, scene-setting, and announcing. The last task has proved a most beneficial one for a retiring pupil and has done as much for him as acting does. In fact, because of the informal, personal style required in announcing to the very young child, the writer believes that in some cases the task of announcing has done more to develop the pupil than hiding himself in a role.

The scenery, devised for all-purpose use and fast, easy shifts, was a set of four separate screens built by the high school manual training department. These three- and four-paneled screens were constructed of light wooden frames 36 inches wide and 6½ feet high, put together with two-way hinges and covered with unbleached muslin. By clever arrangement and adeptly applied and variously colored calsonines, almost any type of simple, suggestive interior or exterior effect could be achieved. No matter what poor stage facilities we faced, our four faithful screens covered a multitude of sins and helped create whatever illusion we desired.

The experience gained by the pupils from the activities of the trouping plays has been invaluable. Here the average-run high-school pupil was faced with responsibility for all phases of production. Here he did the things that the usual course offered

only in books. Ingenuity had to be exercised far more than in the usual high-school play, where the same stage and equipment are used over and over.

Another point noted in the development of the class members during our first year of trouping was improvement in acting ability. The type-method of casting was not employed. Pupils were given an opportunity to try any and all types of characters. It was not unusual, for instance, for a boy to play the fat and funny King one week, a little boy the following week, and announce the play the third week. What professional actor wouldn't envy these children this opportunity?

With each pupil responsible for his own make-up, and each playing such a wide variety of character types, skill in the art of make-up was naturally developed. Make-up for straight parts was necessarily applied subtly because of the close proximity of the audience in some schools, but in all cases the troupers really became skilful in the application.

Practice in costume design and scenery designing and execution were other practical gains from this project. Before rehearsals were begun on any of our five productions, the play was studied from the costume and setting standpoint. Each pupil submitted designs and ideas on how to costume and set the play. These were discussed and the best were used. The ideas for costumes were then offered to the Junior League Committee who made the garments.

The scenery, however, offered even better experience to these youngsters, for they not only designed the sets but actually estimated the amount of paint to be used, planned the color schemes to harmonize with the costumes and the mood, and then did all the work of the scenic artist. Several of the class members become so interested that they spent many hours of outside time on this phase of the work. One of the boys has decided to follow the career of a stage designer.

Another class assignment which has given the pupils splendid experience is the writing of continuity, or the narration used in announcing and explaining the plays to the young audience. After a careful study of the script, each class member was required to write what he considered interesting and vital continuity. In the case of plays requiring scene changes this was especially important, not only to explain the changes but to hold the attention of the youngsters while the shifts were made. These speeches were read to the dramatics class by their authors, the best points selected, and the composite result used.

Other production jobs—electrician, curtain man, prompter—also schooled the troupe member to be a more efficient helper.

By bringing to the grade-school pupils fine, worthwhile children's plays we found that they not only gained pleasure from our visits, but a keen interest in the human actor, a finer literary appreciation, and a quickened perception in general. Several teachers have remarked about the vital interest in the plays—plays so different from the movies, their usual theatrical fare—plays written within their grasp and understanding, plays written for them!

They particularly enjoyed seeing familiar literary characters come to life on the stage, such as Heidi, Robinson Crusoe, Captain Hook, and Jack-the-Giant-Killer, whom they met in "The Enchanted Door". "The Princess and the Swineherd" was dear to them because here, too, was the familiar.

Each visit we made seemed to be more and more appreciated, until the running, screaming children who greeted the school truck when its load of youthful thespians appeared was a thrilling sight to behold.

That grade-school pupils enjoyed the

players was also shown by their rapt attention during the show, and their eagerness to discuss the plots and players after each performance, reports one teacher. At another school such enthusiasm was manifested over the costuming that the children wished to express themselves in the form of art reproductions done in crayons. In most cases these sketches were extremely accurate, showing careful observation.

Now for the statistical report on the Trouping Theatre. The group of fourteen who comprised the trouping players have enacted five different plays in each of the ten grade schools of the city. In addition to the fifty regularly scheduled plays, three special performances were given to civic groups, making a record of fifty-three performances for the school year 1940-41.

The plays were presented without charge to the elementary-school children in grades from one to six. The average audience was about three hundred pupils.

Short plays, not over twenty-five minutes in length, were selected on a basis of appeal to children of grade-school age—plays that were both educational and entertaining. The repertoire included "Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil", by Stuart Walker, "The Enchanted Door", by Marjorie Barrows, "Stay-at-Home Rebel", by James Gardner Sisson, "Yes, Your Majesty", by Jeannette Johnson Dempsey, and "The Princess and the Swineherd", an adaptation of the Hans Christian Anderson story, by Everett Glass.

So, we the Trouping Players and the Boise Junior League feel that if we have given five doses of sheer enjoyment and educational advancement to three thousand grade-school youngsters of Boise, we have not labored in vain.



### *I.Q. Hullabaloo*

"Have them tested! Get their I.Q.'s!"

We were I.Q.'ed; they were I.Q.'ed; everyone was I.Q.'ed. Here's a moron; there's a genius; and over

there is a normal one. Well, never mind. Perhaps we can find some use for the normal one.—LEORA M. CASE in *New York State Education*.



# Do Junior High Schools Cultivate *Desirable* ATTITUDES?

A study of 7,000 pupils in 50 schools

By HAROLD S. TUTTLE

IN JANUARY 1940 in these columns a question was asked by the author—asked in all sincerity, though misunderstood by a few as implying a negative answer: "Has the Junior High School Kept Its Promise?" The promises cited were (1) easier transition from elementary to secondary schools, (2) lower school mortality, (3) adaptation of the curriculum to life, and (4) improved conduct, especially in terms of decreased problems of discipline.

The question elicited prompt action by junior-high-school teachers through the executive committee of the Department of Secondary Education. A study was undertaken, with the author as coordinator, in the hope of finding whether the question could be at all accurately answered—a preliminary survey on a small scale, but planned with a view to detecting "leads".

The primary function of the study, determined after consultation with both a guiding committee and several consultants, was

to get a picture of attitudes of pupils who had attended junior high school long enough to register whatever influences were unique in that institution. The second term of the eighth grade was chosen in order to make possible comparisons with eighth-grade pupils who had continued in eight-year elementary schools.

Some of the changes which have taken place in the last three decades modify the demands on the junior high school which were accepted by its founders. Attendance at high school and college has multiplied enormously. Many states have raised the legal age of leaving school beyond the normal age of completing junior high school. No longer, then, is school mortality in its own grades a problem which the junior high school must help to solve. The question now is, does attendance at junior high school increase educational ambition? These ambitions the study attempted to discover.

Better adaptation of the curriculum to life was believed to involve two attitudes: first, increased confidence in vocational planning; second, greater interest in the cultural fields which the curriculum attempts to cover. Each of these was included in the study.

In the matter of conduct-attitudes a double check was possible. Various reactions were obtained from pupils, and in addition, discipline records for a full week were obtained from all teachers of the pupils questioned. Thus the data sought in this study included (1) school ambition, (2) confidence in vocational judgment, (3) civic attitudes, and (4) culture interests.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *The ideas expressed in "Has the Junior High School Kept Its Promise?" in the January 1940 CLEARING HOUSE by Dr. Tuttle led to the organization by the Department of Secondary Education of the N.E.A. of a study of the problem, in which Dr. Tuttle served as coordinator. In this article the author reports the results of the study, which covered fifty schools in eighteen states, representing every section of the United States. Dr. Tuttle is a member of the faculty of the School of Education, College of the City of New York.*

Data were gathered from more than seven thousand pupils in fifty schools, distributed among eighteen states and representing every section of the United States: four in the northwest, nine in the southwest, four in the south, twenty-one in the middle states, and twelve in the northeast. The sizes of the schools may be judged by the numbers of pupils in the upper term of the eighth grade. These numbers ranged from forty-eight to three hundred thirty-seven.

Shortage of funds for the study necessitated severe limitations. To compare products of the eight-year elementary school with products of the junior high school would have required an equal number of the former type. For such an extension of the study funds were not available. Nevertheless, much light is thrown on the whole problem by the data gathered from the excellent sampling of junior high schools. Much of this evidence indicates that junior high schools cultivate desirable attitudes.

*Civic attitudes.* In a set of questions about pupil likes and dislikes and their trend since the pupil entered junior high school, one item was "putting one over on teacher or principal". This pastime was reported as being increasingly disliked by eighty-four per cent of the pupils in one school, by sixty per cent on the average, and by less than forty per cent in only one school. It would be interesting to know how many children in the sixth grade would express increasing dislike of putting one over on the teacher, in an unsigned questionnaire!

But more important than the fact that a substantial majority of these pupils have asserted a cooperative attitude toward school authorities is the discipline record of these same pupils. Some principals questioned the value of this feature of the study on the ground that teachers and principals vary widely as to what they consider serious enough to report as discipline problems. The inquiry was included in the belief that in fifty schools the variations would offset one another.

That faith seems to have been justified, for the higher the number disapproving antagonism to the school, the smaller the number of discipline cases. The size of the school apparently entered into both the scoring and the discipline situation. The nine smallest schools (fewer than 100 in upper-term eighth grade) averaged thirty-one discipline cases per hundred pupils; the six largest (over 200 pupils) averaged twenty-two discipline cases per hundred pupils. The unwillingness to put one over on teacher or principal was greater in the large schools by some four per cent, the average score being sixty-two per cent.

Several studies of cheating during examinations have been made, many of them finding a large proportion who cheated and defended the practice. On the unsigned questionnaires in this study more than half the pupils expressed a growing dislike of getting help in examinations since entering junior high school. That the credit is not wholly due to the junior high school is indicated, however, by the characteristic differences between geographical areas. Whereas in the south sixty-nine per cent of the pupils were against cheating, in the northeast only fifty-three per cent so scored. In disapproving this trait the large schools again made the best showing.

"Let the buyer beware" is a policy in trade which is increasingly frowned upon by distributors as well as consumers. Not so, however, by eighth-grade pupils, if the sampling obtained is typical. Less than forty per cent protested at a very uneven trade in which the loser was at the time ignorant of the value of the article traded. In one school the per cent was as low as twenty-three, in another as high as fifty-five. The average, thirty-nine, represented the lowest average score in the entire test. The coastal states, both east and west, showed low scores; the middle and south, higher.

Prejudice against foreigners is widespread in the eighth grade. To the question of whether relief should be given to other than

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United States citizens only fifty-five per cent expressed a view tolerant of foreigners. While in one school more than seventy per cent answered "yes", in another a bare twenty-five per cent responded thus. The strongest prejudice was seen in the northeast. To force all foreigners to leave would be too severe, however, in the opinion of eighty per cent of these same pupils. The twenty-five per cent who objected to deportation but approved withholding relief had no chance to indicate how they hoped to dispose of foreigners!

Rugged individualism—every man for himself—called out protests from nearly three quarters of all the pupils tested, as many as eighty-eight per cent in one school, just half that in another. Exploratory and project curriculum schools do not show that they are utilizing group activity for social training, for the per cent of answers against individualism is but sixty-five in exploratory schools, while in traditional schools it is approximately seventy-five.

Large schools appear more effective than small ones in building up positive opposition to intolerance and also to individualism. Geographical areas show quite different trends in the two traits. The northeast leads in opposition to individualism, but shows least opposition to intolerance. The south, which shows least opposition to foreigners, shows but mild opposition to individualism.

In civic matters in general, then, the junior high school falls far below the ideal, although it may be that little more can be accomplished as long as so many elements in the environment tend to create prejudice, individualism, and low standards of honor. The wide disparity between schools, on the other hand, says that schools could do much more.

*School ambition.* If, in 1911 when junior high schools were begun, ninety-nine per cent of the eighth graders in any school could have been inspired with the hope of finishing high school, the most optimistic

educator would have been amazed. Not only in one, but in twelve of the fifty schools studied; in large schools and in small; east, west, north, south; every pupil, or ninety-nine out of a hundred, expressed that hope. In one school only did less than eighty per cent so score. Of the 827 pupils in the south only eight failed to record high-school ambition. The lowest average for any geographical area is ninety-two, in the northeast. But this is high compared with that of three decades ago. What part in this change has been wrought by the junior high school cannot be known. A comparison with elementary-school pupils is highly desirable.

Closely paralleling the high-school ambition score, but approximately thirty per cent lower, is the college ambition score. The most notable variation is that the large schools, while showing the highest per cent of high-school ambition, show the lowest in respect to college ambition. However, the parallelism is sufficient to suggest that school ambition is not merely "in the air", but that school experiences have an influence. Here the evidence indicates that the junior high school has kept its promise.

*Vocational judgment.* Five of the fifty schools classified themselves as using dominantly exploratory curriculums. Thirteen others indicated that shop, household arts, or some other feature differing from the traditional academic curriculum was included. The original reason given for exploration in vocational fields was the hope of aiding pupils in making vocational choices intelligently before they chose their high-school courses.

The results of the present study are not conclusive. There is a wide difference between exploring a number of vocations and taking a shop course. There is a greater difference, even, between a shop course given with the purpose of uncovering a vocational aptitude and the assignment of "dumb bells" to shop work as a last hopeless resort. The last procedure can by no stretch of the imagination be called exploratory.

Whether the five schools classified as exploratory followed similar or different methods could not be questioned; nor could the relationships between these and the other thirteen be examined. The one question whose answer is chiefly desired must remain a question in this report, except insofar as internal evidence casts some light.

Some seventy-three per cent of the pupils asserted that since entering junior high school they had become more clear and confident about vocational choices. But when they judged the wisdom of three boys in each of two narratives involving vocational choices, the two sets of judgments showed little resemblance, nor did either evidence very much intelligence in vocational planning. Considering this lack of internal evidence of validity, it is questionable whether the highest average score for pupils' "yes" answers, made by the five exploratory schools, has much significance. For the present there is little evidence that the junior high school has kept its promise of providing vocational exploration of such nature as to give pupils a basis for sound judgment in vocational selection.

*Culture interests.* Since tests were unsigned, fairly spontaneous responses concerning culture interests were anticipated. Correlations of .50 between culture interests and social ambition, .50 between culture interests and civic attitudes, and .40 between enjoying scientific magazines and enjoying hobbies, all support the assumption that the answers are reasonably sincere.

Ten items were included among the questions seeking to gain evidences of culture interests. These dealt with reading, music, dramatics, radio, hobbies, and clubs. Since several individual interests compete for time and actually conflict in school activity schedules, it was not expected that culture items would correlate highly with one another. Taken as a whole the culture score is a composite picture rather than a cumulative array of proofs of culture. The chief

value of the scores is the evidence they offer of the relative strengths of various interests. The ranking of interests thus indicated is:

1. Reading newspapers (73%)
2. Club activities (65%)
3. Reading magazines (65%)
4. Reading books (59%)
5. Group singing (58%)
6. Dramatics (55%)
7. Playing musical instruments (52%)
8. School journalism (42%)
9. Reading poetry (40%)

In many of these fields, and in the combined average, the northeast trails, with the southwest leading. There are two exceptions, however, which may be more important than the average: in reading newspapers and in reading books the northeast leads, with the southwest trailing. Size of school shows significant influence only in taste for poetry. Small schools score ten per cent higher than large on this item. Dramatics interest three per cent more in small than in large schools. In group singing the trend is the same in direction and amount. Other items are influenced more by other factors. Exploratory schools lead notably, as would be expected, in club activity. They also lead—which might not be expected—in the reading of newspapers and the reading of books.

The lists of books and magazines which these eighth-grade pupils claim to have read constitute an interesting study in themselves. The club list is likewise an independent study of no little interest. The low score for school journalism obviously reflects an excellent opportunity not yet utilized by the junior high school.

The conclusion is obvious: Many important leads have been discovered. The bearing on the future of secondary education of the facts, were they known, is critical. Before another decade passes educational authorities need to know whether the organization of the junior high school, its separate housing, or alternative curriculums chiefly determine its effectiveness in preparing citizens of tomorrow.



# "Ralph had my permission to skip HIS HOMEWORK"

By  
A CALIFORNIA PARENT

Dear Mr. Blank:

The study of world history is fascinating, and especially so at this time, when a modern Napoleon is trying to force his will upon the world, and creating almost unlimited human misery in so doing.

A good teacher should be able to make the study of history so attractive, as it was to me at the age of sixteen, that it would be superfluous to load down a history class with a separate book for each pupil, to be read during the Christmas vacation and to be the subject of a verbal report, and in addition to instruct each pupil to write a long composition on the life of Henry VIII.

Vacations were instituted, according to a popular opinion, to give respite from cares of regular employment. We make a great joke about the postman who goes for a walk on his vacation. Yet some teachers are prone to load down their pupils with enough homework to last through an entire vacation. If each of Ralph's teachers had given him as much work as you did he could have stayed up nights during vacation and yet have failed to complete it. And there are so many more interesting and attractive ways for a boy of fourteen to sixteen to spend a vacation!

Ralph received a drill press from me for



EDITOR'S NOTE: "This is a letter actually received by one of our teachers from a parent of a tenth-grade boy," writes F. C. Hemphill, assistant superintendent of schools, Compton, Cal., Union Secondary School District. "The letter is so frank, so constructive, and so free from bitterness that I consider it worth passing on as a parent's protest against homework."

a Christmas present. He had saved for and bought a metal-working lathe a few months before. So his shop was beckoning to him, as well as the Clearwater Airport, and the Model Airplane Airport, near Western and Rosecrans.

He has so much homework during regular school sessions that he has little time for recreation. I think you modern teachers tend to overdo homework. It seems to me a sign of weakness in present-day teachers. I rarely took home a book from high school during my time there (1899-1902, Terre Haute High School), but was interested enough to spend many evenings in the public library voluntarily looking up reference work, especially on history, physics, and chemistry. And I have forgotten most of it.

So I told Ralph to enjoy his vacation and that I would write a note to you explaining why he had not done his homework. Incidentally, his mother and I, taking turns, have read the book aloud during our evenings together and Ralph listened with more or less interest, so he will probably be able to give you a fair verbal report on it. He likes the study of history, to a certain extent, and I am trying to make it more attractive to him.

You have the privilege of grading Ralph's work as you like, and the duty of teaching your classes in such a way that the work is so attractive that they will get the most possible from it. I am interested not alone in the marks that you give Ralph, nor yet alone in the work that he does in high school. I am trying to so train him that he will be a useful member of society, a respected citizen, a credit to his family, and a man whom anyone would be proud to call a friend. Yours truly, JOHN BUCK

# THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

*A department of satire and sharp comment*

*Contributors:* FRANK I. GARY, DOUGLAS S. WARD, MAUDE DEXTER, LOIS STEWART, CECELIA LODGE, LAURENCE B. JOHNSON, ALAN WHYTE, EFFA E. PRESTON, JOSEPH BURTON VASCHÉ, J. ALVIN TAYLOR, CARR SANDERS, and R. ELIZABETH REYNOLDS.

"I really don't have trouble with discipline," confessed Laura Spiller, "but I send one kid to the office every month—just to show the principal that I'm on the job."

F. I. G.

## *Dr. Blown's Coaches*

Holder High, apple of Dr. Buster I. Blown's best eye, has just hired two coaches at salaries well above even the theoretical maximum for "ordinary" teachers in the system.

Dr. Blown prides himself on the shrewd deal by which he filled a new elementary-school principalship with a man who will teach fifth grade, run the playground, and take care of other odd jobs as they arise. The focal point of Dr. Blown's pride is that this jack-of-all-elementary-school-jobs will get a salary just a trifle over half that paid to each of Holder High's new coaches.

D. S. W.

## *Summer Circus*

One school of education announces a free iced watermelon as a summer-session inducement. This may be a definite summer-school promotional trend, since you can't get anybody to listen to a radio program anymore unless you bribe him with pots o' gold, sets of encyclopedias, free hair tonic, or double or nothing. I can see the shape of things to come:

"Ivorydome T. C. announces daily triple Bingo throughout the summer quarter. Extra added

grand daily prizes. Send 10 cents accompanied by covers torn from three old mimeographed courses of study for catalog of offerings, including 40 pages of color photographs of bathing beauties snapped at last summer session. First registrant in each course will be given a set of dishes.

"Daily attendance prizes, ranging from television sets to a carton of Camels, will be given to the holder of the lucky number. Members of each class will be encouraged to submit questions for the final examination. Ten dollars will be paid for each question used. If the class can't answer it, you will be given an honorary degree and a set of the Rover Boy books. And remember—free beer and hot dogs will be served daily in the library."

M. D.

## *What Makes Horseraces*

One teacher had ideas that varied somewhat with the school's usual routine, but she doggedly went ahead—making her ideas work.

Her principal called it "initiative"—and recommended her for promotion.

Another teacher had ideas that varied somewhat with the school's usual routine, but she doggedly went ahead—making her ideas work.

Her principal called it "stubbornness"—and recommended her for dismissal.

Just another case where it's largely the *principal* of the thing.

L. S.

## *Handling the Mothers*

Don't wait until Mrs. X comes to you in the PTA meeting and asks how Sonny is getting along. Just barge right up to her—deflate her courage before she deflates yours—with a brisk, "Sonny's behavior is terrible; he doesn't do his homework and he acts as if he hadn't any training at home."

Bolster up your position by having your record book handy. If there is another mother nearby it

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Among the contributors to this department are superintendents, high-school principals, and teachers. The educators whose writings appear here almost invariably have a serious point to make, but have chosen satire and humor as more effective methods of making that point. The editors of THE CLEARING HOUSE do not necessarily endorse the points of view expressed here.*

will help to speak loudly enough so she can hear as you point out how much lower Sonny's grades are than her son's. If he has low test marks, you could mention that his intelligence tests show he has a poor memory.

Now call in a few of your colleagues; have them tell her how poorly he is doing in their classes. If she tells you she is disappointed because she planned to have him go on to college, nip the idea in the bud with, "You are wasting your money; he hasn't the ability."

By this time Mrs. X is 100 per cent behind the educational system, and wherever she goes, she will speak glowingly of your work in particular. It is such contacts as this that get the townspeople heart and soul behind the campaign to raise the teachers' salaries.

C. L.

Among editors of educational magazines, taking-themselves-too-seriously amounts to an occupational disease. When we pool the ponderous self-esteem of an editor with the grave infallibility of a teacher, we sure have something, and I for one try not to keep it.

L. B. J.

### *The Drone*

"Elmer Shoddy insists that it's foolish for teachers to spend hours in checking pupil attendance and permanent records," said Chet Cannymen.

"And Elmer is no novice in making errors. Why, the office became so tired in correcting his mistakes that his homeroom was taken away from him. Now he sits in the faculty room and gloats over his good fortune."

A. W.

The bigger the summer the harder the fall.

E. E. P.

### *Dust Off Your Glasses!*

Sadie Cohntassel who keeps school somewhere down the line recently sent in her sure-fire wrinkle remover which is here published for the benefit of the entire profession:

When you're feeling low, take a race into your bedroom and look right into your mirror and hold the pose until you break out into a blamed big smile. As Sadie points out in her letter, "practice'll make yer smile near perfect, like it did me!"

In fact, Sadie has left ten minutes early for school every morning, for the past thirty years, so she could stop for a final exchange of greetings

with the familiar face in the looking-glass on the coat rack in the hall. Then, as she has closed the outside door and stepped down the stairs to the street, these five thousand or more times, she has displayed a broad, genuine smile, which she has carried with her all day long.

What she claims about smiling sounds kinda foolish. But there may be something to it after all, and maybe a sour puss isn't indelible. J. B. V.

It is harder to search for the reasons for wrong doing than to punish the wrong doer. Which pays the greater educational dividends? J. A. T.

### *Thrills*

The thrill that comes when the principal compliments you upon your splendid execution of a nasty task—and adds another as part of his compliment. (The willing hoss gets no rest.)

The thrill that tingles down one's spine when the faculty secretary proceeds to scold you in public in front of pupils or parents, all because her coffee did not agree with her that morning. (Marry her off.)

The thrill received at the hands of a patron who praises us to our face when asking a favor, but who strafes us to the principal when not in the mood for praising. (Were all such souls whelped in the month of Janus?)

The thrill your club gets after having worked long and faithfully on a school production only to find that when the dinner for the cast and director is given, the stage hands, electricians, etc., are too plebeian to be remembered. (There is a proletariat even in a school democracy.)

The annual thrill one's bank book has each September first when its balance reads again for the twentieth time \$00.00. (None but the brave should dare to teach. The less brave become millionaires.)

C. S.

### *Casanova, Jr.*

My students don't give me all of my good laughs in the classroom. Not long ago I sat behind several sophomore boys in one of our downtown moving picture theaters.

On the screen the sweet young thing, in the usual fit of anger, had sent her lover on his way just as a dear old lady entered the room. She admonished the girl by saying, "Dear, you shouldn't have done that. Don't you know love never comes twice?"

"Huh," burst forth one of the boys in front of me, "it's already come to me four times!" R. E. R.

# NATIONAL CRISIS:

## What can art and music contribute?

By  
G. D. WIEBE

THE CATASTROPHE that victimizes millions of common people and that leaves no one free of its threat and influence cannot be disregarded by teachers today.

To teach children without reference to the precarious state of the society to which they belong is the ultimate in escapism. But the job of preparing pupils to meet the challenges of today must not be left solely to the teachers of the social studies. A threat to a whole society must be met by all the forces in that society.

What, then, can art and music teachers do in a period of national crisis? It seems obvious that they have little to offer in the production and assembly of a war machine or the training of manpower. Likewise, there is little place for their influence in the problems of international political and economic relations. However, the gaining and sustaining of internal stability within the nation itself fall squarely and with an enormous challenge into the province of those sections of the curriculum known as the humanities.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Dr. Wiebe's original title for this article asked what art and music teachers could contribute during a national crisis. But possibly what he has to say is of interest and value to all high-school teachers and administrators, and not merely to art and music teachers. The author is research associate in the Bureau of Educational Research of Ohio State University, and is a specialist in the field of the arts. The program that Dr. Wiebe offers in this article has a sociological approach which may surprise some art and music teachers.*

Art and music teachers now share the responsibility of promoting internal stability in the United States.

The crux of the problem lies in the kind of internal stability Americans desire. One kind can be obtained if the populace is kept in a stuporous sort of ignorance about possible changes. A second kind can be achieved by systematic and ruthless punishment of any attempt to depart from the dictates of a ruler.

A third type of internal stability is gained by limiting information to a mixture of truth, half-truth, and falsehood which will make a particular and preconceived course of action seem to be the only reasonable course of action.

This brand of national hypnotism avoids rational analysis; finds its strength in slogans which have no valid roots in the ideals, privileges, and responsibilities of the people whom it attempts to delude; and because of the absence of spontaneous acceptance, its platitudes are loudly and repeatedly dinned into the ears of the populace. Teachers who respect human intelligence will reject such methods.

There is a fourth kind of internal stability, which seems defensible, even obligatory, and of pressing importance in the work of American teachers. Its base is a love and understanding of the native roots and well-springs of the culture of the United States. Its midpoint is the intelligent and critical appraisal of contemporary problems in terms of the *ideals* which stem from our national heritage. Its goal is the attaining of those ideals. Such a stability is the stability of motion from many points toward common goals.



As long as humans have lived together, they have honored and taken strength from their forebears. They have remembered and profited by past misfortunes and mistakes. They have relived and commemorated triumphs and disasters. From these ties with their own cultural history, they have derived a sense of direction and a loyalty to a set of national ideals.

The folk heritage in a picture, dance, ceremony, song, story, worship, custom applies a thousand influences to make a people act, at any given moment, as they do act.

A people divorced from its past is derelict. A people content with its past is degenerate. Internal stability in the life of a nation means a basic involvement in, and understanding of, its past as it impinges upon the present.

But the simple accumulation of historical facts will accomplish little. Materials to constitute the American heritage must be selected, and selected in a rational fashion; not in terms of the interests of minority groups, not to rationalize a particular contemporary program of action, but to sketch the road that the nation has constructed and traveled so far in its quest for the attainment of democratic ideals. That road is marked with the belief in:

- The dignity and worth of the common man
- The right to use one's intelligence
- The rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights
- The worth of the family as a social unit
- The right to health, nutrition, and shelter
- The individual's responsibility to society for maintaining this way of life

A love for the rich and humanistic story of the growth of our culture, and a clear, compelling vision of the unfulfilled promises, are the reasonable and essential prerequisites for an intelligent internal stability.

Suppose that the building of an enormous skyscraper took longer than the life span of the workmen who began it. One can imagine, then, the nature of their conversations and instructions as aged craftsmen prepare young men to take over the task:

the depth of the foundation and the stones and the mortar that form its ground-work, the composition of the rock and earth beneath it, the strengths and tensions and limitations of its basic structure, the rich beauty of portions of the building already completed.

They would talk of men's lives to which the structure thus far is a monument, those who fell from high scaffoldings and were killed, those who executed fine carving in stone, those who raised great blocks and set them in their places. And finally, one can imagine the awed contemplation by the old craftsmen and the younger ones, of the artist's conception of the completed structure.

All of these insights and many more would prepare the young men to labor in continuing the building. Old scaffolding must be taken down, faulty stones replaced, and the job of building must proceed. Pupils today face a society which is neither inspiring nor encouraging. In order to cope with the job that faces them, they must have a picture of the plan of work, a knowledge of the interior of the structure, and a vision of the clean beauty of the finished edifice as it will rise from the disorder of construction. The tasks that they face are not pleasant or easy.

Pupils must, in a very real sense, feel the devotion and unflagging faith of their predecessors in bringing a way of life to the stage where it is handed on to them. Most important of all, once they have accepted the task, they must be vigorously dedicated to continued building on the girders and buttresses which constitute the design and strength of the envisioned structure.

Internal stability in a democracy must be a stability of movement from backgrounds which are known and loved, toward goals which are mutual and lofty. Through the ages the arts have been used by men to dramatize, intensify, and clarify aspirations, and to commemorate, honor, and interpret past events. The arts are used for inspiring.

The arts, then, are appropriate media for providing a sense of direction, a consciousness of where we have come from, of where we are going.

In suggesting specific ways in which the arts may function in gaining and sustaining this internal stability, one use of the arts will be omitted—use as a means of escape. Abstract art and music with their offerings of release from realistic concerns have a place in a culture. Internal stability within the individual may be attained through escapism, providing there is a constructive re-direction of the emotions. But in times of difficulty it is a good sign to see most of the people facing and working toward a solution of the difficulty. It is a bad thing to see many people seeking too frequent release by a schizoid retreat to less troubled and less real realms of experience.

The responsibility of art and music teachers is the realistic, programmatic, representational one of dramatizing and intensifying our native struggle toward the achieving of a way of life in which brotherhood and the operation of intelligence will enrich social living. Several kinds of art and music activities would implement this course of action:

1. *Art and music activities* which, together with reading and research, will develop a realistic and engaging picture of the way Americans have lived, should be encouraged.

Folk art, dances, stories, songs, should round out a large and treasured aspect of every American pupil's equipment for adult life. But a dilettante's acquaintanceship with saddles, sagas, and songs will not suffice. These folk backgrounds must be interpreted and presented as part of the growth of America.

In the interpretation of these folk backgrounds the songs, dances, legends, leather work, horsemanship, and rope-throwing of the cowboys must not be left at the stage of the dime movie. These folk items must be related to the opening of new lands, the

development of a new and cosmopolitan populace, and the evolving of a code of ethics.

New ways of living brought new dangers to traditional liberties. The race between the pinto pony and the lurching locomotive signified new ways, new privileges, new rules. The moving panorama of the West, with the good humor, the resourcefulness, the toughness and the tragedy that permeate it, is only one of many heroic sagas that make up the sources of the potpourri called the pupil's contemporary culture.

The sensitizing of pupils to their heritage is the greatest single service in which art and music teachers might now engage. Pupils must see, and treasure, the great democratic ideals as they have emerged and developed through the years. In no way can this heritage be portrayed so clearly as through the arts.

2. *Art and music activities* should be especially encouraged when they involve creative work relating to achievements and frustrations in the quest for democratic ideals.

Art teachers occasionally report that they believe in starting with pupil interests, but that when they let pupils do as they please they can't think of anything to do. Pupil concerns and interests result from their age and maturity level, home life, relationships with age mates, and so forth. But a factor of major importance is the climate of ideas and feelings furnished in the classroom situation. If the pupils have no ideas, teachers might well ask themselves: What have we given to the pupil about which he might reasonably be expected to be excited or interested? Perhaps the most vicious misinterpretation of progressive teaching and its attention to pupil interests is that this theory justifies teachers who are devoid of ideas and interests themselves.

Never have pupils needed so much symbolized information as represented by the arts in order to understand their society. The complexities of privilege and denial, of

success and frustration have only to be observed in order to stimulate a ferment in adolescent minds. In many instances, pupils have no avenues through which they may directly attack the problems which they see; but values can be symbolized, conditions can be deeply sensed, and a significant experiencing of problems and achievements can be precipitated through the arts.

In promoting this sort of creative activity, one caution seems to be particularly important. Recently the paintings and drawings of pupils have shown evidence of interest in the less-privileged members of our society. The undernourished paper boy, the backyards of slum dwellings, the expressionless faces of exploited workers, are frequently represented in pupil art.

In too many cases teacher and pupil comments upon such art pieces concern interesting use of light and shade, vivid blues, poor composition, promising feeling for design. That the paper boy is hungry, that the slum dwellings are fire traps, that the stuporous dull face, smudged with coal today, may tomorrow be smudged with blood doesn't seem important. A preoccupation with techniques, and an interest in subjects because they are bizarre may lead to callousness rather than sensitivity.

The "Ballad of the Boll Weevil" is a good-natured but earnest song of the devastating waste wrought by the "little black bug". Sung by urban pupils, it is too often

just "a cute song". Art and music teachers must bring pupils into a mood—and an understanding in which creations or renditions (which are also creations) will be deeply grounded in the reality which makes those subjects worth commemorating in art form. Techniques and skills then find a place in refining and vivifying the expression sought.

The question may now be posed: How, specifically, would such a program affect internal stability?

*First* of all, such a program will promote patriotism in the best sense of the word. It will orient pupils in the developmental trends of national culture. It will promote a loyalty to democratic values which have been fought for throughout our history. It will clarify the ideals upon which democracy rests. It will differentiate between transient concerns and persisting problems.

*Second*, it will foster an understanding of the blind alleys, the retrogressions, the exploitations, the denials of freedom, into which the country must not be led again.

*Finally*, it will invest with excitement and color and challenge the kind of life that people live in a democracy.

If the arts could contribute to a vigorous, clear-sighted, loyal citizenry, dedicated to the perpetuation and refinement of democratic values, then they would indeed have played a heroic part in this crisis of democracy.



### *Shall I Pass John?*

Shall I pass dull John? No! He will pass himself. He will become a year older in spite of me. He probably will gain from seven to eight pounds in weight, and three inches in height. His social behavior will take on something from the group, and perhaps give something. Geography, history, arithmetic, language, et al., if presented with the same appropriateness to his growth, will be assimilated and, in turn, directed to his further growth. And that which will thrill him most will be his emerging

realization of what everything is all about.

Learning experience appropriate to the growth demand at any given time will secure more rapid and firmer growth than that provided on clock schedule, and will relieve the teacher and pupils alike from the impossible—bringing all pupils to a point of uniform maturation at a given time. Hence the word "promoted", which we so mockingly write across the grade cards now, should disappear.—  
M. L. MCCOY in *Michigan Education Journal*.

# LONE SCOUTING

## in a Rural High School

By  
HAROLD O. SPEIDEL

**P**INE GROVE Borough has had Scouting for twenty-five years and yet, in all that time, few boys from outside the town have been in the Boy Scouts.

A survey revealed that of the 210 boys in the Pine Grove High School, 95 live outside the town, which means that fifty per cent of the boys in the school community were not reached by scouting. These boys live at distances varying from one mile to seven miles from the school building. Some were anxious to be Boy Scouts; others would have liked it, had they thought it possible.

What phase of Scouting would appeal to these boys? How could they be interested? The matter was discussed by the principal and the Scout executive of the Council Area in which Pine Grove was located. Both felt that Lone Scouting was the answer to the question.

The decision to use Lone Scouting was based on several considerations. First, the boys came from a widely scattered area and from some distance. Second, they had no regular means of transportation because there were no school buses. Third, there were frequent changes in the faculty and no one person could be designated Scoutmaster to plan for a troop's growth.

Lone Scouts meet the same requirements as do boys in a regular Scout Troop, but

with the difference that a Lone Scout does not belong to a regular troop and so does not attend troop meetings weekly. He has no direct guidance from a Scoutmaster or older Scouts. Thus Lone Scouting puts the boy pretty much on his own and makes him independent of the usual Patrol and Troop meetings. Any boy who enters the Lone Scout Tribe can carry on his program regardless of his attendance at high school. If the Tribemaster were to leave he would not be missed as much as a Scoutmaster would. So the plan cared very nicely for all three considerations mentioned previously.

A call was made for interested boys and ten responded. One of the faculty members, an Eagle Scout and a Scoutmaster in a neighboring village, consented to serve as Tribemaster. Since he carried his lunch to school, he could meet with the boys at noon and could help them with their Tenderfoot tests. A Tribe Committee was organized, with the supervising principal as chairman and three high-school teachers as members. Two of these teachers were Eagle Scouts and were selected so that they could lend help to the Lone Scouts when necessary; the other was the teacher of vocational agriculture, who was selected because he knew practically all of the rural boys.

On January 22 the ten boys were inducted into Tenderfoot Rank at a school assembly, and the charter was presented by the Scout executive of the Council Area. The Lone Scout Tribe of Pine Grove became the first such Tribe in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Since the ceremonies on January 22, four more boys have applied for membership and Scouting has been extended to rural boys through the Pine Grove High School.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Mr. Speidel is supervising principal of the Pine Grove Borough School District, Pine Grove, Pa. Readers in rural districts where a regular Boy Scout troop could not be formed may obtain information on Lone Scouting by writing to E. H. Baaken, Director of Rural Scouting, Boy Scouts of America, 2 Park Ave., New York.



# TEACHERS, here is YOUR FINAL

By  
RAY H. SIMPSON

**S**PRING is the traditional time for a final evaluation of the pupils' work. Early fall might also be a good time for an alert teacher to look back over his work for the previous year and see in retrospect where materials, attitudes, and procedures have been inadequate, so that planning for the new year's work can go on intelligently and effectively.

To aid the teacher in doing this the following set of questions has been formulated. Check the correct answer in view of your own activities during the past year, and give particular thought to those for which you have checked the "No" answer.

*Provide for individual differences in academic ability.* During the last school year did you:

1. Systematically diagnose and record for each child his chief strengths and weaknesses? Yes ... No ...
2. Have your pupils help plan their assignments? Yes ... No ...
3. Have the pupils help in the construction, administration and scoring of at least some of their tests? Yes ... No ...
4. Have as much concern about the very

rapid learner as about the very slow learner? Yes ... No ...

5. Enlist the aid of the learners in the selection of appropriate materials for their needs? Yes ... No ...

6. Attempt any systematic check on the success of your teaching in previous years as reflected in the activities of those whom you have taught? Yes ... No ...

7. Help provide reading materials for daily use which had a spread in difficulty of at least five grades? Yes ... No ...

8. Have different standards of promotion for each youngster? Yes ... No ...

9. Objectively compare the achievement of each youngster with what he should be achieving? Yes ... No ...

10. Give youngsters a major share in planning their work and deciding when it should be done? Yes ... No ...

11. Have you tried out some major change in your teaching materials or methods? Yes ... No ...

*Professional development.* During the last school year did you:

12. Read at least four professional magazines in the average month? Yes ... No ...

13. Study at least four professional books? Yes ... No ...

14. Become familiar with at least one new standard test? Yes ... No ...

15. Attend at least one professional convention? Yes ... No ...

16. Participate actively in your teachers' meetings? Yes ... No ...

17. Write at least one professional article? Yes ... No ...

*Aid youngsters in developing socially.* During the last year did you:

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Teachers, inveterate testers and measurers of their pupils, are here invited by the author to eat some of their own sauce. At any rate, here is a check-list which teachers might find interesting to apply to their past year's work this fall, or to their current year's work next spring. The author is assistant professor in the department of psychology, University of Alabama, University, Ala.*

18. Help youngsters make plans for out-of-school activities? Yes ... No ...

19. Have a sufficient number of small clubs at your school? Yes ... No ...

20. Have a committee or group of pupils help select, provide and care for materials in your room? Yes ... No ...

21. Have youngsters help make at least 80% of their assignments? Yes ... No ...

22. Encourage the youngsters to make rules for activity and conduct in the classroom? Yes ... No ...

23. Have a group of youngsters responsible for halls, cloakrooms, toilets? Yes ... No ...

24. Encourage pupils to study and work out many of their problems together? Yes ... No ...

25. Permit pupils to have partial charge of the main library (if any) or the classroom library? Yes ... No ...

26. Have pupils help decide when the classwork should be done? Yes ... No ...

27. Consciously mark a pupil on the amount of social progress he made during the year? Yes ... No ...

28. Discuss more than once with pupils the problem of how to work most effectively with others in a committee? Yes ... No ...

29. Encourage pupils to bring magazines, newspapers, or other materials to school for the use of other pupils? Yes ... No ...

30. Give any test designed to measure social development? Yes ... No ...

31. Aid children in intelligently carrying on a conversation in the subject which you teach? Yes ... No ...

32. Leave the classroom for fifteen minutes or longer and find the pupils capable of carrying on profitably without you? Yes ... No ...

33. Jointly decide, with the pupils and the school administrators, upon what materials (textbooks, pamphlets) available money shall be spent? Yes ... No ...

The intelligent teacher diagnoses his weaknesses and then systematically sets about to eliminate them. The questions given here should suggest some ways in which you as a teacher can improve your work during this school year.



## Clearing House Contributor is Author of *Corner Druggist*

Robert B. Nixon, Jr., a frequent contributor to THE CLEARING HOUSE, is the author of *Corner Druggist*, a successful non-fiction book published last spring by Prentice-Hall. It is the biography of his father—a portrait of the life and times of Robert B. Nixon, Sr., small-town apothecary for almost half a century, and quite a character.

Doc Nixon struggled to support his family in forty different corner drug stores scattered over the Middle East. Work on his many profitless inventions took time, as did his voluminous outpouring of letters of opinion addressed "To the Editor:"—and his love of arguing about ideas drove business away. Through the book pass a rich array of Doc Nixon's customers, and the problems that they would bring to an old-fashioned druggist who acted as father confessor.

The author teaches in Radnor High School,

Wayne, Pa. He has been a frequent contributor to "The Educational Whirl". His full-length articles in this journal include "The Christmas of Oscar Stifflip, Prin." (Dec. '37); "Ax Grinders' Week" (Oct. '38); and "The Receiving End" (Dec. '39).

Naomi John White, also a regular contributor to THE CLEARING HOUSE, reported recently that she has sold a number of short stories to the general magazines. One of her stories brought a \$400 check from *The Country Gentleman*.

Miss White contributes often to "The Educational Whirl". Her CLEARING HOUSE articles include: "Blue Pencil the Red Tape" (Nov. '39); "Lendmeyou-ears!" (Feb. '40); and "Three Blind Mice" (Nov. '40). Miss White teaches in Muskogee, Okla., High School.

Numerous other CLEARING HOUSE contributors are professional writers after school hours.

# SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

Edited by THE STAFF

**MILITARISTIC:** It seems inevitable that for a long time to come we are going to live in a militaristic world, report 14 city superintendents and former city superintendents who took a study tour sponsored by Occupational Education Tour for School Superintendents. Therefore public schools should help interested pupils to select and prepare for occupations with one eye on the kind of work in which they can serve best in the armed forces. The group report, published under the title "All-Out Defense Job Training—A Call for Dynamic Action" is being distributed to 3,500 city school superintendents. Lists of Army and Navy jobs are included. Commending the NYA and the CCC, the report is against their extension into fields that historically and properly fall within the purview of public education, as this results in many cases in the establishment of what are in reality Federal vocational schools.

**NEIGHBORS:** A one-semester social-studies unit on Latin America is recommended for high schools by U. S. Commissioner of Education Studebaker as one means of aiding the solidarity and total defense of this hemisphere. Teachers and schools planning to cover any phase of Latin America in any course are promised "vigorous assistance" from the Pan American Union, U. S. Office of Education, and the National Education Association, all of Washington, D.C.; the American Library Association, Chicago; and the American Junior Red Cross and the Council of National Defense, of New York City. Readers might write to these organizations for unit outline suggestions, teaching materials, bibliographies, etc.

**STAMPS:** A program to enlist the nation's schools in the drive to sell defense savings stamps is being developed by the National Committee on Education and Defense in cooperation with the Treasury Department.

**TREND:** Air-raid drills were being tried in the New York City school system last spring, reported the newspaper *PM*.

**NEIGHBORS:** Aid for the program of more intensive study of Latin American countries and their people in the U. S. classrooms is "Latin America Books for Young Readers", an annotated bibliography of graded books suitable for children from the first to the twelfth grade. This pamphlet is reprinted from *The Booklist*, April 1, 1941, is

25 cents, and may be ordered from the American Library Association, Chicago.

**COMMERCE:** The Chamber of Commerce of the U.S. has appointed an Education Committee which proposes that "even closer cooperative relationships be established between superintendents of schools and the business men of their respective communities". Working with a committee of the American Association of School Administrators, the Chamber's Education Committee outlined these objectives: (1) Removal of all grounds for the suspicion of the prevalence of subversive activities in the school systems. (2) Vitalizing of courses relating to the American form of government. (3) Encouragement of religious and moral training. (4) Organization of local committees of business men and superintendents to formulate "programs centering upon present-day problems". (5) Acceptance of a creed built around belief in God and America as a basis for moral, citizenship, and economic training. The 13 members of the Chamber's Education Committee include 3 lawyers, 3 insurance company executives, and 3 bankers.

**WEEK:** That hardy perennial, Children's Book Week, is set for November 2 to 8. The theme is "Forward with Books!", and the book-week people suggest exhibits, pageants, and plays. From Book Week Headquarters, 62 West 45th st., New York City, you can get a free manual of suggestions and ideas, and copies of the official poster, which aren't free. And anyway, wouldn't posters created by your pupils be more interesting?

**COMPARATIVE:** "Education Under Dictatorships and in Democracies" is the title of pamphlet No. 15 in the "Education and National Defense" series of the U. S. Office of Education. The booklet offers a study of how during the past 20 years dictatorships in Europe took over the educational systems for party uses. Copies are 15 cents, may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C.

**CONSTITUTION:** A new series of 26 recorded radio programs on the Constitution of the United States and its amendments, including the Bill of Rights, was made available free of charge to radio stations and schools on September 1. Schools may arrange with local stations to have these 15-minute, dramatized programs broadcast at a time convenient

(Continued on page 64)

## ➤ EDITORIAL ➤

# Education and Social Defense

"What boots it at one gate to make defense,  
And at another to let in the foe?"—Milton

**I**N EVERY AGE education more or less capably serves in social defense, either through instinct or intent. When it does so capably, "it transmits the social heritage" for the sake of the social heirs, for their welfare, security, and happiness.

To us as teachers in America has been committed, intentionally and imperatively, a large share in the defense of our national safety. We teachers are therefore called upon to use all the resources of our training, our skill, our knowledge, and our authority to assure and extend the welfare, security, and happiness of youth in a society safely and progressively democratic.

This is the argument against the temptation to teach for the sake of "the social heritage" instead of the social heirs, pleasant though the former indulgence may be to some of us. In a word, we teachers are called upon to be defenders and interpreters of democracy rather than purveyors of letters, traditions, and doctrines.

On the meaning of education for the defense of democracy volumes have been written and volumes more will be written. More important than books and theories, however, are actions and practicalities. The problem is how to make our vast accumulations of social experience, our skilled personnel, and our school organization concentrate their functions for the common surety of our society.

To approach the problem effectively we teachers must achieve a common working consensus, along the channels of the following guiding principles:

1. Danger to our social order lies only partly in military attack. We must under-

take defense against assaults—whether overt or insidious, internal or external—on all the prized and honest values of our way of life.

2. A social order cannot be preserved or defended as a static pattern; continuous progress in social welfare is a condition of social endurance.

3. The end of the war will not mean the end of our defense problem. We will need to undertake aggressive defense against the reactions, cynicisms, and pathologies of social living that may arise as aftermaths.

4. Armies, battlements, civilian guards, can defend life and territory, but not the social order. To do the latter we must all fortify our spirits and our morale. We must eliminate from our psychologies the fears and prejudices that inhibit our democratic relations and activities. We must eliminate, for instance:

- a. Doubts as to the vigor of democracy.
- b. Fear of efficiency and wisdom of "self-discipline".
- c. Racial, creedal, and class prejudices.
- d. Fear of change, experiment, and progress.
- e. Fear of cultural variety and human differences.
- f. Doubts as to the might of human intellect and human reason.
- g. The inertia of complacency and smugness.
- h. Infantile habits of seeking security in human "saviors".
- i. Primitive habits of making religions out of race, or soil, or state, or the hysteria of self-sacrifice.
- j. Fears of philosophic or historical preachments of social doom.

5. Democracy must be made to function as an assertive, affirmative social enterprise in which all can find participation and intelligent allegiance. Our school curriculum



must be such an organization of democratic experiences as will teach democracy through the practice of democracy and assure wise social decisions through practice in socialized school decisions.

6. We must redirect the emphasis of our basic "educational psychology" away from the standardized, over-simplified studies in "delimited" testing and measurement, and toward studies that will lead to a better comprehension of the prejudices, hates, fears, and other emotional drives that affect human relations.

7. We must seek to discourage social thinking in stereotypes and tabloids, and encourage scientific thought for social and economic benefit. This will be the best preventive against the deceptions of fatuous radicalism. We must energize and verify our social thinking as we have our thinking in mechanics or biology, so that we may learn how to use human wealth for human welfare without plundering the earth's resources.

8. We must not disregard the values of art and literature but must teach them as creative and symbolic expressions of our social culture, as protests, criticisms, and prophecies. Social life is often an imitation of art, and art a justification and defense of the social life.

9. Though committed to the principle of collective social endeavor, we emphatically are opposed to social systems in which individual initiative, aspiration, and realization do not have play.

10. We must not discount the value and significance of "knowledge" in education,

nor accept instead doctrines of "will" or "faith" or "intuition". On the contrary, we must extend our domain of knowledge and discovery of truth and seek to make them function for the social good.

11. Out of the welter of educational investigation and research we must achieve an integration of educational aim and attitude as to purpose, method, standards, and content. We must achieve a unified, fundamental agreement on function.

12. We must learn to regard law and legislation not as codes and statutes for restraint and control, but as mechanisms for establishing social welfare, conceived by social intelligence and implemented by social action.

13. We must gear our school activities to the activities of our regional communities, so that our schools may become culturally enmeshed with the concerns of community living.

14. We must not disdain "philosophy" as a serious concern. On the contrary we must amplify and extend a philosophy of democratic life to reinforce it, interpret it, and give it the depth and significance of metaphysical sanction.

Perhaps at first thought such guiding principles may seem somewhat far from the problem of social defense. And yet on second thought it should become clear that only as we teachers boldly, aggressively, and honestly pursue our calling in such a spirit and toward such ends, are we playing effective roles as preservers and helpers in the democratic way of living.

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# SCHOOL LAW REVIEW

## Two Paddlings in One Day Illegal

By DANIEL R. HODGDON

While a teacher has the right to inflict corporal punishment for misconduct on a pupil in every state in the United States except New Jersey, he has no right to paddle a boy twice in one day. Two paddlings give the boy a right to a sit-down strike, if the "status quo" of his anatomy has such an urge.

The real issue in this case is lack of humor on the part of the teacher. Barrett Richardson was a boy who believed education should contain a little levity, and that all the guessing games should not be those of algebraic problems. He attempted to bring into the weary school day a little extracurricular activity by propounding a riddle he had obtained from the *Kansas City Star*. He received no credit for reading this paper, but the repetition of the riddle in school was too much for the teacher. His punishment for this sacrilege to the dignity of the classroom was to be called out in front and made to take a stooping position, while the austere schoolmaster applied twelve or fourteen times a paddle made from a piece of flooring.

This punishment was to serve as a lesson that riddles from the *Kansas City Star* had no place in the educational program of youth. This punishment, however, did not dampen the ardent spirit of the boy, who believed in extracurricular activities and their initiative and creative-building proclivities fully as much as does Dr. Philip W. L. Cox. The boy appeared to be an expert spitball maker. At least this fact is suggested by the opinion of the learned court of appeal, which speaks of a wad of paper scientifically constructed after the usual manner of the school "sub-extracurricular" activity, and skillfully aimed and fired at the teacher. Whereupon the teacher applied the paddle for the second time, with more vigor, and thereon lies the judgment from the aforesaid facts.

The teacher defended himself on the grounds that a school teacher, insofar as it may be reasonably necessary to the maintenance of the discipline and efficiency of the school, and to compel a compliance with reasonable rules and regulations, may inflict reasonable corporal punishment upon a pupil for insubordination, disobedience, or other misconduct. To this the court agreed, but added that the punishment must be reasonable.

To cause black and blue marks on the buttocks of a riddle-propounder was unreasonable, and to

inflict a second punishment on top of this on the same day, while it might be justified because of such misconduct, was not justified when the evidence of the first unjustified punishment had not been erased by the passing of time. The canceling of the teacher's contract and his dismissal were justified, and judgment to that effect was affirmed. The court will protect ambitious youth. Educators take notice. Read: *Berry v. Arnold School District*, 137 S. W. 256, Feb. 26, 1940.

### Abolishing Special Service

A school board given the discretionary power to appoint physical inspectors, physicians, teachers, nurses, oculists, optometrists, or any one or more of such persons, has no power to dismiss a nurse who has become a permanent employe and employ a physician to take her place, although the qualifications of the physician may seem more desirable for the position.

The professions enumerated in the law are merely descriptive and are in the nature of a limitation on the employing power of the board. The dismissal of the nurse and the employment of a physician did not constitute the discontinuance of a special service authorized by the law. (*Chambers v. Board of Trustees of City of Madera School Dist., Cal.*, 101 P. (2d) 727, Apr. 22, 1940.)

### A Teacher's Tongue

In California the law requires that a board of education give a teacher a ninety-day notice of any fault that can be corrected, and give the teacher ninety days to correct said fault before dismissal. A teacher was accused of having an uncontrollable tongue, of flying into fits of temper and rage, making abusive statements to pupils, accusing the superintendent and principal of persecuting her, and making public statements to that effect. She was dismissed.

The teacher had absented herself from the classroom two days without permission. The court found that the teacher had not been given an opportunity to correct these faults, and that she had not been a persistent violator.

The faults in the notice, said the court, were

very serious delinquencies on the part of the teacher, but they were the kind that the law considered can be corrected. "*The law assumes much*," said the court. "They indicate a quick temper and an uncontrolled tongue." Many persons have learned to curb their tempers and to control their tongues. These faults can be corrected; therefore the teacher was unjustly dismissed. But such faults as immoral or unprofessional conduct, commission or aiding or advocating the commission of acts of criminal syndicalism, dishonesty, incompetency, mental and physical unfitness to instruct children—these things are illegal, apparently beyond cure, and authorize dismissal without notice.

A teacher must be given a chance to hold her tongue for ninety days, and to be absent from school two days without permission is not persistent bad conduct that authorizes dismissal of a teacher. Teachers with tongue-wagging proclivities should read the case of *Fresno City High School District v. Marietta De Caristo*, 92 P (2d) 668, 33 Cal. App. (2d) 333, July 12, 1939.

### *Case of a Teacher Who Waives a Right*

A statute enacted solely for the benefit of probationary employees in a school system may be waived by an employee, since one may waive the advantage of a law intended solely for his benefit. Where a teacher was informed that her position was to be abolished, and that her services would not be required, her request that no notice, as required by statute, be served upon her waived this statutory right. (*Leonard v. Board of Education of San Francisco Unified School Dist. et al.* 97 Pac. Rep. (2d) 1032, Jan. 17, 1940.)

### *Blind-Date Contract*

Some boards of education have strange notions about a contract with a teacher. They often do not seem to realize it is a binding contract exactly like any other form of contract. It reminds the writer of the contract a board of education made with a teacher some years ago.

The three members of the board were unable to select a teacher for their school from pictures they had received in the application. They wanted a goodlooking teacher. Each member selected a different picture, according to his own idea of what constituted an attractive teacher. After much discussion they came to an agreement that they would place all three pictures on the table, and from the other end of the table each member would take turns at snapping tiddlywinks, which they had found in

a box in the room, onto the photographs. Each board member was to have ten chances and the picture on which the largest number of tiddlywinks fell was to be officially declared elected as the teacher.

After a half hour of riotous fun that would have aroused the envy of many an august board of education, one picture was found to have accumulated the largest number of tiddlywinks. This teacher was declared elected, and a contract duly signed and forwarded. In due time the contract was returned properly signed by the teacher. When the teacher appeared a week before school opened, she was found to have one glass eye, a wig, and one wooden leg.

The board, in dismay, canceled the contract, claiming that she lacked personality, and employed another teacher. The first teacher, however, sued on the basis of her contract, and the court held that the board must pay her full salary for the period for which she was employed by contract. A contract is a contract, and there was a sufficient amount of her person left to constitute a legal teacher.

The question of a contract was recently raised when a board, because of the reduced number of pupils in a school, annulled the contract of a teacher on the ground that there was not a sufficient number of pupils to warrant the employment of a teacher, and the board closed the school for lack of funds. The court, however, awarded judgment to the employed teacher for the full amount of her salary, saying, "The law is well settled that when a teacher is employed for a specific term at a specific rate of compensation, full recovery may be had and lack of funds is no defense to the action."

This fact is always true unless there is a provision in a contract or a constitutional or statutory provision prohibiting recovery. A contract is a contract. See *Board of Public Instruction for Suwanee County v. Arnold*, 194 So. 334, March 1, 1940.

### *Mandamus Proper Remedy To Enforce Duty*

A mandamus is the proper remedy to enforce a school board's mandatory statutory duty. Where a school teacher on tenure, who has been unlawfully dismissed, is refused a contract for an ensuing year, a school board can be compelled to renew the contract of such a teacher by a writ of mandamus. A motion of the board to quash such a writ of mandamus is the equivalent of a demurrer, in that it admits all the well pleaded allegations of the writ. (*Bragg v. School District of Swarthmore et al*, 11 Atl. (2d) 152 (Penn.) February 1, 1940.)



## BOOK REVIEWS



JOHN CARR DUFF and PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editors*

*Arithmetic in General Education* (Sixteenth Yearbook of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics), Chairman R. L. Morton, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1941. 335 pages, \$1.25.

This Yearbook, the final report of the National Committee on Arithmetic, will appeal to teachers of arithmetic and to those who have the responsibility of training future teachers. It will help to make them aware of the many ways in which quantitative ideas function in the everyday life of a child, from his pre-school days through the secondary school.

Emphasis is given to the importance of evaluating the present curriculum from the standpoint of grade placement, considering the maturity of the child and his readiness for various topics. The suggestions are for a systematic presentation of number experiences to develop meaning and understanding rather than mere mechanical performances from the first grade on. The child knows more about number when he enters school than he is given credit for, but on the other hand, the postponement of such

subjects as taxation and investments from the eighth grade to the senior high school is recommended, which means some adjustment of the curriculum on all levels.

A reorganization of methods is equally necessary in order that later abstractions may be the result of earlier concrete experiences. To accomplish this, the classroom teacher will need a larger supply of concrete materials than is now found in most classrooms. This in turn will necessitate a new type of teacher training in order to equip the teacher with methods and procedures to meet the needs of small groups and individuals. The teacher should be aware of the social as well as the mathematical applications of arithmetic. Computation is important only as it contributes to problem-solving; therefore the teacher must be conscious of the functional point of view.

Tests of all types will have a place in the revised curriculum, but the teacher will not judge the ability of the child through pencil and paper methods alone. He will devote more time to diagnosis of the cause of difficulty, which means individual conferences to determine how the child is

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thinking. The ways in which quantitative ideas are used in the activities of the classroom will be given greater consideration.

In one chapter, the dangers of superficial interpretation of research are carefully pointed out. The reader too frequently assumes, without considering the purpose of the investigation, the conditions under which the study was conducted, and other pertinent factors, that the conclusions of a study are valid because they have been put in print. There are, however, one hundred references to research studies. There are also another hundred references that should further enrich the background of theory and understanding.

Specific phases of the arithmetic curriculum have been carefully treated in this volume and should be very helpful to the teacher in re-evaluating her course of study, methods and equipment. This reviewer believes that this book will prove to be more valuable than the Tenth Yearbook, *The Teaching of Arithmetic*, which has been an excellent help to arithmetic teachers.

RUTH I. BALDWIN

*The Educators Index of Free Materials*, by JOHN GUY FOWLKES. Randolph, Wis.: Educators Progress League, 1940. \$17.50.

This index is an annotated schedule of free materials of significant educational value. Every edu-

cational worker, in the course of his experience, has made some use of *free materials*, that is, materials which institutions, organizations, or individuals are glad to furnish without cost. The average worker has a vague notion that a wealth of free material is available if he knew where to find it and how to obtain it. But when he wants to locate specific materials for a specific purpose or time, he has not the vaguest idea where to turn.

This *Educators Index* is the answer to all worries on this problem. The free materials include bulletins, maps, atlases, pamphlets, exhibits, charts, books, films, slides, and film strips. Items from many sources are listed. They include departments of the Federal government, foreign governments, agricultural experiment stations, state institutions, chambers of commerce, travel bureaus, human welfare foundations, and many industrial concerns. The index contains many features which make it serviceable for practical workers, among which are the following:

(1) Titles and addresses of free materials are listed, (2) Teachers' Manual is integral part of index, (3) Only materials of educational value are listed, (4) The materials are annotated briefly and pointedly, (5) Authorization or permission is granted by issuing agencies—no postage required on anything but films and slides, (6) Edited by a recog-

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The *Index* should have a place in every school in the United States. The service should be available to every department and every classroom. The reviewer believes that the cost of the service is somewhat high. The materials listed are free, but the cost of the service is \$17.50 per year, or \$28 for for three years. He hopes that later the publishers may be able to follow the economic policy of greater circulation at less per unit cost.

O. M. C.

*Mathematics in Action*, Book Three, by WALTER W. HART and LORA D. JAHN. New York: D. C. Heath and Co., 1940. 442 pages, \$1.28.

As a text for an introductory course to four years

of high-school mathematics or for a course in general mathematics needed by pupils who do not intend to study further in the field, *Mathematics in Action*, Book III, integrates the work of the three junior years and provides a foundation for higher mathematics. Ten major sections cover a review of the fundamental skills and problems in arithmetic; simple algebra through formulas, graphs and equations; the intuitive geometry of similar and congruent triangles; scale drawings, the Pythagorean Theorem and indirect measurement through plane trigonometry. All of these groups are treated from the viewpoint of social significance and the verbal problems presented involve such every-day situations as taxes, investments and social security.

Especially outstanding is the chapter on graphs, with a more than adequate treatment of the increasingly popular and vivid pictograph. Ample test material is distributed throughout the book with cumulative reviews strategically placed and attractive illustrations of problems within the pupils' range of interests.

EDNA M. JONES

*Measurement in Today's Schools*, by C. C. Ross. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1941. xviii + 597 pages, \$3.25.

Measurement is at last beginning to recognize its limitations, along with its contributions. In this book Ross sets forth quite adequately the basic considerations in measurement, a philosophy of education, and a statement of desirable educational outcomes. His style of writing is easy, interesting, and more like popular writing—quite a relief from the generally formal and pedantic style usually found in professional books. The ideas presented are from the point of view of both the elementary and the secondary school with the usual topics, historical background, construction, use, etc., covered.

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**Some considerations omitted:** (1) No attempt was made to list and analyze the standardized tests available in the various subject areas. This is not a defect. (2) Importance of pupil participation, the pupil-constructed test and the work of Richard D. Allen in self-measurement. (3) In the chapter on motivation there may be something more fundamental and lasting to consider other than the results of experiments with the examination as a motivating factor.

E. R. G.

**Professional Education for Experienced Teachers**, by KENNETH L. HEATON, WILLIAM G. CAMP, and PAUL B. DIEDERICH. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940. 142 pages, \$1.25.

1. Progressive education as a movement has probably been impeded by a lack of teachers trained

by methods and in methods consonant with the basic tenets of the movement.

2. For five years the Progressive Education Association has experimented with a set of teacher-training procedures called the "summer workshop".

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5. There is no magic in the term "workshop". If the PEA workshops have made any contribution to teacher training, it does not follow that every college that borrows the term "workshop" will assuredly provide its students the unique advantages that may have been discovered in the experiments at Ohio State University, Sarah Lawrence College, Penn State College, and the other institutions where PEA-supervised workshops have been conducted. Neither does it follow that "courses" not labeled "workshop" must lack entirely the desirable quality of experience advanced students are searching for.

J. C. D.

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*School Library Service in the United States, An Interpretative Survey*, by HENRY L. CECIL and WILLARD A. HEAPS. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1940. 334 pages, \$2.75.

As indicated in the preface, the basis for this volume is the dissertation of Dr. Cecil entitled *An Interpretative Study of School Library Service for the School Superintendent* (New York University, 1939). The eight chapters treat the following topics in a manner designed to be of special interest to superintendents:

The rise and development of school library service in its relation to significant movements in education; the importance of school library service in the modern educational program; state participation in school library service; large area participation in school library service (rural schools); the local administration of school library service; an analysis of school library service programs in certain cities under cooperative and school board administration; federal participation in school library service; a basic platform for the development of school library service.

The volume has both the virtues and the limitations of a dissertation. It is excellently documented, and selected annotated bibliographies fol-

low each chapter. The considerable amount of statistical data is well tabulated. Altogether, it is a valuable contribution to the literature in this field and should be especially useful to all persons concerned with making or appraising administrative policies affecting the organization of school library resources as an integral part of an educational program. Among several points of emphasis the authors maintain, one might note the one on the desirability of cooperation between school library and public library.

J. C. D.

*Vocational Guidance for Boys*, by ROBERT C. COLE. New York: Harper & Bros., 1941. 252 pages, \$2.50.

In recent years the educational frontier has been befogged with words, words, words. Educational "Pedigree" has been tossed about as in ping pong. In the midst of such confusion, the words of Tennyson come to mind:

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In the reviewer's judgment, here was a volume yearning to be written. Roughly there are two ways whereby modern education may be improved: One is by a cold, objective, statistical study of practices. In this approach norms, charts, and graphs loom large. The other method is by an observational study or report of selected good practices. In this second approach, intuitions, insights, and human adaptations loom large. The author in this volume shows how scientific knowledge is combined with common sense in this boys' club in Worcester.

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O. M. C.

*Education on the Air*, Eleventh Yearbook of the Institute for Education by Radio, edited by JOSEPHINE H. MACLATCHY. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1940. 367 pages.

This volume would be more accurately described as a record of the proceedings of the Eleventh Institute for Education by Radio, held at Ohio State University during May 1940. It is one of a series already well known to all persons who have been following the development of procedures for education by radio, and it is a necessary item on the faculty shelf in every school library where the teachers are encouraged to be informed about the principles and techniques for employing aural aids.

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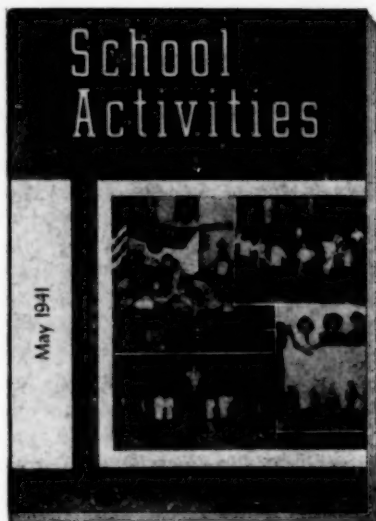
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One of the newer devices discussed was the use of phonographic recordings of radio-broadcast programs. It was inevitable that advocates of the use of radio education would sooner or later discover the greater possibilities of the phonograph for most educational purposes; but the availability of good recordings is due to the skill and genius of the broadcasters, not the record companies. J. C. D.

*Freedom or Fascism?* Connecticut League of Women Voters. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940. 56 pages, 25 cents; 10-100 copies, 20 cents; 100 up, 15 cents.

The purpose of this pamphlet is indicated in the preface: "When we say we are glad we are not living under a dictatorship, how much do we know of the realities of daily life in a totalitarian country?" This pamphlet describes the details of life in Germany and contrasts them with our democratic life. For a more positive approach, schools may prefer the *Our Freedoms* Series published by Row, Peterson. J. C. A.

*A New Geometry for Secondary Schools*, by THEODORE HERBERG and JOSEPH ORLEANS. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1940. 402 pages, \$1.36.

Stressing plane geometry as a system of logical reasoning, *A New Geometry for Secondary Schools* proceeds on the basis that the reduction of assumptions to a minimum has no place in high-school mathematics. Therefore, many of the standard propositions are delegated to the realm of assumptions, although proofs of these assumed theorems are given in a chapter at the end of the book. Formal proofs, following this thesis, are cut to the core by organizing the subject matter so that the text acts as a guide instead of an answer book. The course thus presented is thoroughly logical, and simpler than the one ordinarily given.

An admirable application of logic to life situations is employed to develop in the pupil a critical attitude toward thinking and, concurrently, an insight into geometric relationships. The authors have clearly designated courses for various pupil levels—a minimum course, one for the average pupil, and one for the superior—along with practice and examination problems. Integration with arithmetic and algebra has been achieved. EDNA M. JONES

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## SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

(Continued from page 49)

for class or assembly-room use. Requests can be made to the Institute of Oral and Visual Education, Radio Division, 101 Park ave., New York City.

**EXCHANGE:** If you are dreaming of a one-year exchange of jobs with some high-school teacher in Havana or Rio or Buenos Aires, you can go on dreaming for awhile. Such exchanges with other American Republics are limited at the present time, announces U. S. Commissioner of Education Studebaker. Some interchange is taking place, and "a much more extensive program of exchanges should and will take place in the future." But if you want to exchange with some high-school teacher in Louisiana or Wyoming (or what state seems romantic to you?) that's surprisingly easy. Watch for a short article by Grace Lawrence on how it's done, in a later issue of *THE CLEARING HOUSE*.

**TEXTBOOKS:** Only 2 states, South Carolina and Oklahoma, have no provisions for free textbooks, according to a report of the American Municipal Association. But in South Carolina there is a state-wide rental system. In 14 states there are optional laws, and in 32 states there are mandatory statutes, concerning free textbooks. And in

14 states, the state—not the local school systems—owns the books.

**HONORS:** If you are a "pioneer on the fringe of advanced learning", but are unknown to the general public, your chances of getting an LL.D. from the University of Chicago have gone way up. In its 50 years of existence, University of Chicago has granted only 86 honorary degrees, doling them out at the rate of one and two-thirds degrees a year. Among the recipients were many a president, king, ambassador, Nobel Prize winner, and such. But this September, 32 honorary degrees will be awarded in one swoop. And many of those honored are relatively obscure "pioneers in learning".

**STICKER:** One of the highway safety sticker designs developed by pupils in an eighth-grade class of Stonewall Jackson Junior High School, Roanoke, Va., was accepted by the State Division of Motor Vehicles for statewide distribution on new inspection stickers.

**DEGREE:** A person holding a Ph.D. degree is almost sure of employment, reports the *Phi Delta Kappan*. A Carnegie Foundation survey covering one-fourth of those who earned the degree in 1940 showed that about 90% had found employment.

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